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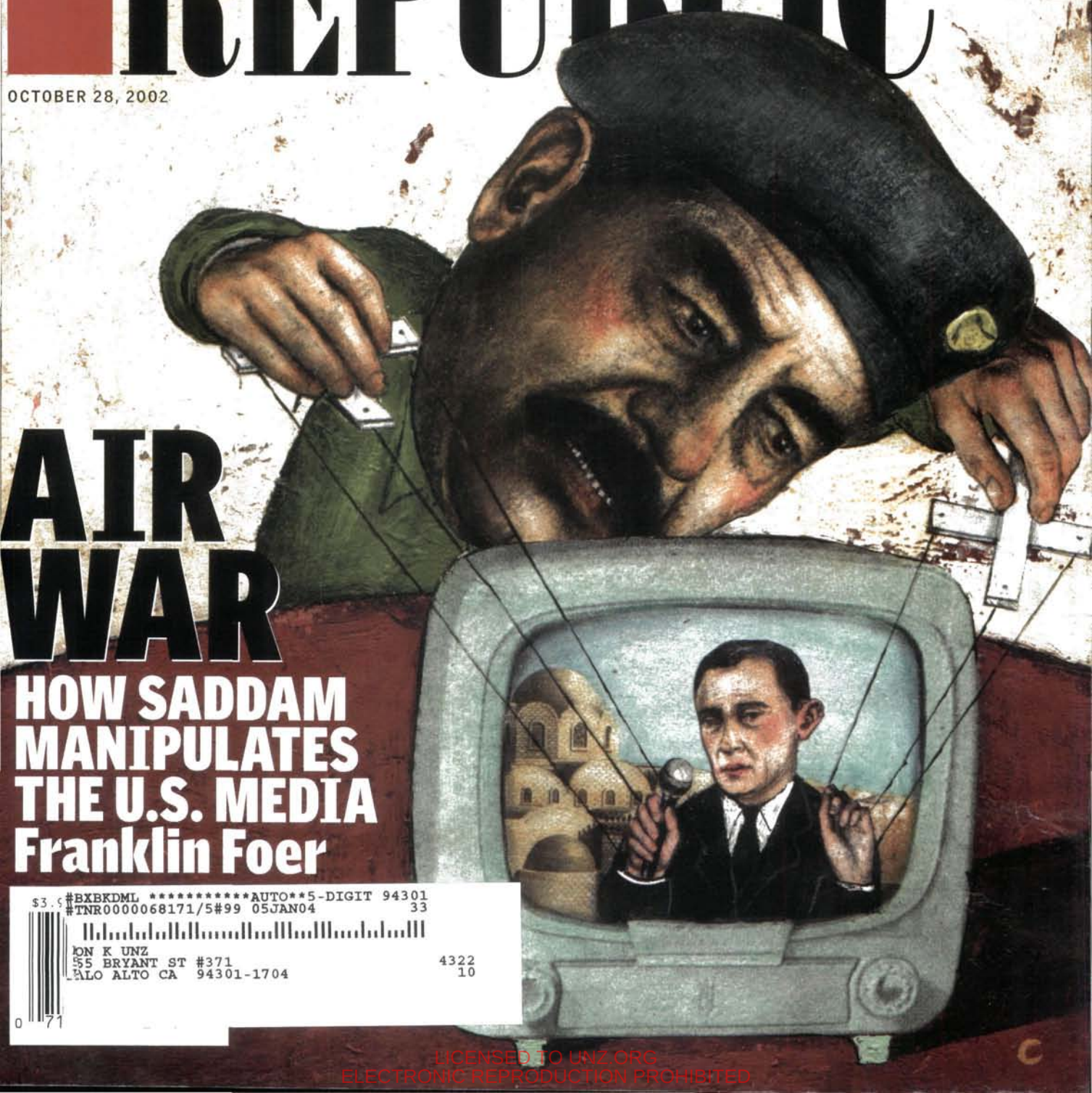

AIR WAR

HOW SADDAM MANIPULATES THE U.S. MEDIA
Franklin Foer

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Reinventing Foreign Aid in the National Interest

Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor by courtesy of political science and sociology at Stanford University.

September 11 brought home to Americans the need for a relentless global assault on terrorist networks and lawless regimes. But our national security also requires a global assault on poverty and development failure. Stagnant and failing states not only breed and harbor terrorism but also generate and spread civil wars, drug trafficking, organized crime, environmental catastrophe, infectious diseases, and refugee flows.

These diverse security threats spring from the failure of scores of countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East to achieve vigorous, sustainable, and broadly distributed development. The threat to global order does not come from poverty alone. It comes from states that do not function well in the public interest. And it stems from the frustration and humiliation of people who see their countries stagnate in corruption and injustice while Europe and America prosper.

Countries need help to develop, but the past approach—providing tens of billions of dollars in aid with no clear standards of performance—has not worked. Although aid has helped to improve health and living standards, it has failed to get at the root of underdevelopment. The core obstacle to economic development is not a lack of resources. It is bad—corrupt, abusive, wasteful, unaccountable—governance. **The key to generating development and building a more enduringly secure world is improving the way countries are governed.**

This key insight is now leading the Bush administration to reinvent foreign aid. This past March, President George W. Bush proposed the first significant increase in U.S. development assistance in a decade. The increased funds will go into a special Millennium Challenge Account, to be allocated to a limited number of countries that demonstrate a commitment to political and economic standards of good governance. President Bush proposes to provide $5 billion in additional funding by 2006 (a 50 percent increase over current development assistance).

A report that will soon be released by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) goes further, seeing promoting effective democratic governance as central to fostering economic development. Hence, it proposes clearly linking foreign assistance to serious governmental reforms that will contain corruption and abuse of power. Where governments are truly rotten, the report suggests channeling assistance primarily through nongovernmental sources, working with other bilateral aid donors and multilateral aid agencies to establish clear governance standards for aid and coordinating pressure on bad, recalcitrant governments. Furthermore, it proposes to spend a larger portion of U.S. foreign aid on democracy and governance priorities: controlling corruption, institutionalizing the rule of law, invigorating political parties, and strengthening civil society.

This is the beginning of a new "tough love" approach to foreign aid. If we fund these initiatives adequately while holding to serious standards of governance, and if we pursue in other realms of our foreign policy the same commitment to promoting democracy and improving governance, we can turn the corner on poverty and hopelessness in the world, which would be a huge contribution to our national security.

— Larry Diamond

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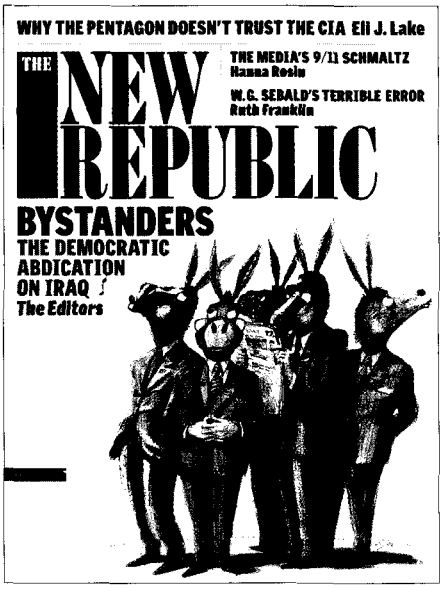
Silent treatment

TO THE EDITORS:
It would be very difficult indeed to argue with your assertion that the Democratic Party is evading the debate over Iraq and the preemptive-strike doctrine ("Bystanders," September 23). But I take issue with the implication that the party's silence on this issue is indicative of cowardice or some other grave lapse of morality. Since September 11 the Bush administration has hijacked the foreign policy debate and, with the assistance of the mainstream press, succeeded in branding any opponent unpatriotic or un-American. For the Democrats to challenge the administration on the one issue that they can't possibly win would be nothing short of suicidal. It would also be plain stupid for them to play by GOP rules, allowing the administration to make Iraq the only issue worthy of discussion one short month before the election.

Vying for a Profile in Courage Award while committing political suicide may seem like a very noble gesture to you. But to those of us who see the Democratic Party as our only salvation against the horrors of the Bush regime, survival doesn't seem like such a bad strategy for the party to adopt in the immediate few weeks. Bold talk now would deprive us of the last trace of an opposition in this country. And in the process, all other issues—from the economy to our civil liberties—will be gone from the national agenda for the foreseeable future. As urgent as the Iraq debate is, it can wait until after November. After all, it was not the Democrats who chose to pick the last two months before the election to discuss this issue. Why should they be foolish enough to take the bait?

MONICA FRIEDLANDER
Oakland, California

TO THE EDITORS:
Disregarding for the moment the issue of preemption, I wholeheartedly agree with THE NEW REPUBLIC that the Democratic leaders in Congress have failed to adequately challenge President Bush head-on about how to deal with Iraq. There are so many areas to discuss before he starts a war: How about intelligence gathering? We did not foresee or prevent September 11, but all of a sudden the intelligence being gathered should not be questioned? What about the incredible cost in dollars and manpower during a



war and for some undetermined amount of time thereafter? What about the potential to rip open an entire region and damage our relations with many countries for years to come? How about the issue of whether we have the right to tell a nation who their leader should be? Is President Bush going to reimburse Americans for the resulting increase in gasoline and oil prices? There has to be a full debate on all of these—and many other—related issues. Support for troops once they are committed is entirely separate, but up until then, and even after, important issues have to be discussed openly and loudly. And the Democratic leaders of Congress must lead the way.

KEN ALBRECHT
Councilman
Haworth, New Jersey

TO THE EDITORS:
If the administration cannot discuss its evidence on Iraq—and it clearly cannot share enough with our allies to convince more than one—how can Democratic leaders afford to have such a frank public discussion of what must be top-secret material? Perhaps their allusion to multinationalism is a subtle way of saying that the evidence isn't there without risking being seen as unpatriotic by those voters who have fallen for this despicable election-year stunt. But perhaps TNR has reliable evidence that we live "in an age when petty tyrants and fanatical terrorists can obtain weapons of mass destruction," and in particular, that everybody's favorite tyrant is on the brink of having them. If so, would you please share it with us?

MICHAEL YOUNG
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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TO THE EDITORS:
I received two solicitation letters from Democratic senators on the same day that TNR—with its cover story, "Bystanders: The Democratic Abdication on Iraq"—arrived in my mailbox. Although I do not entirely agree with the magazine's stand on the question of whether the United States should invade Iraq, at least I know where the editors stand. Needless to say, I kept the magazine and threw out the letters. TNR was right in saying that all else pales beside the prospect of a war and the unknowable, but easily imagined, results. If the Democratic Party is unable and unwilling to take a stand and loudly voice its position vis-à-vis Iraq, why should I care whether Republicans or Democrats control the House and the Senate?

SUSAN M. BRANTING
Raleigh, North Carolina

Press briefing

TO THE EDITORS:
Hanna Rosin's article regarding too many words about the terrorist attacks of one year ago accurately critiques the majority of the coverage as simplistic and sugarcoated, in contrast to the rare, sacred, silent, and serious TV documentary ("All Talk," September 23). Obviously, the most accurate coverage has allowed those directly involved to tell their stories without interruption. The frequent media references to the date are desensitizing and almost vulgar—akin to replaying the fall of the towers repeatedly. The reality that one is witnessing hundreds of people dying is easy to overlook during the spectacle of each collapse, culminating in enormous dust clouds. Any attempt to honor the victims of autumn 2001 in Manhattan, the Pentagon, and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, is made all the more challenging by the media's penchant for clichés and a quick resolution or "a happy ending, a valuable lesson, a useful moral" of which Rosin writes.

JOSEPH A. VASSALOTTI, MD
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
New York, New York

Crime rate

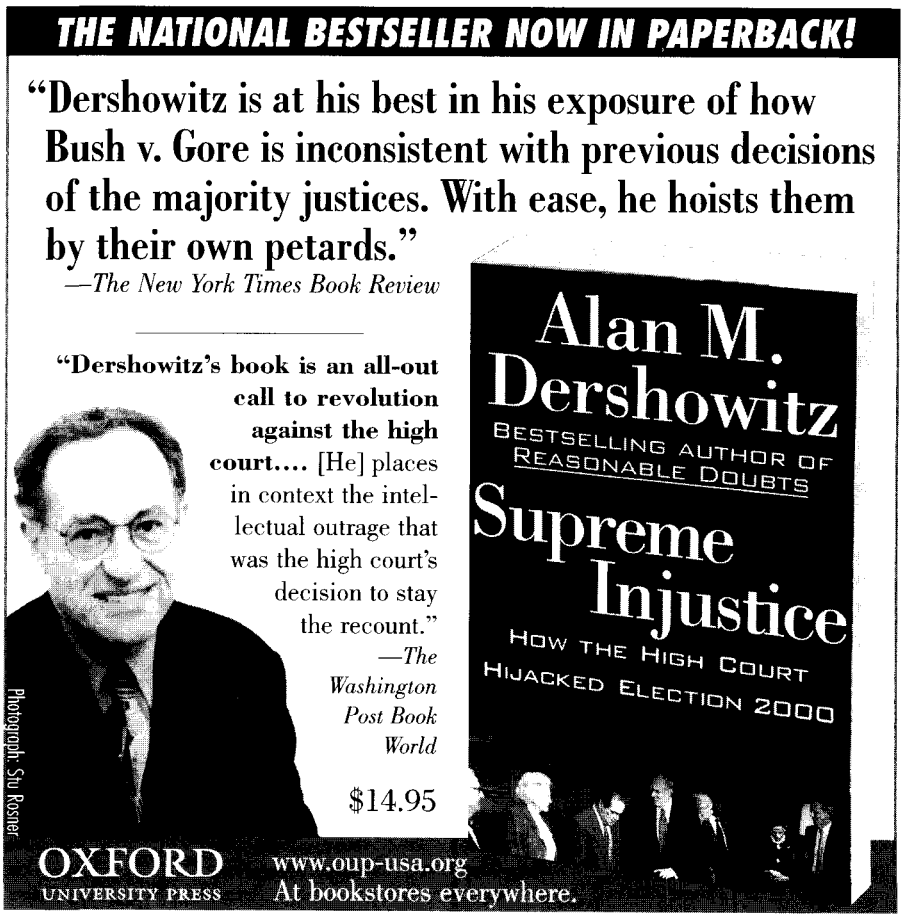
TO THE EDITORS:
Ruth Franklin's misplaced criticisms of W.G. Sebald merit a response ("Rings of Smoke," September 23). She complains that Sebald referred to the Allied bombings of German cities as acts of "extermination" and "incineration," as if the application of these terms slighted the Holocaust. Well, we did exterminate German civilians, be they men, women, or children, and we did incinerate many of those we exterminated. The fact that the Germans did the same thing to innocent Jews, in far greater numbers, does not turn our wholesale slaughter of civilians into something other than what it was. The Holocaust was the worst crime of the century, but it was far from being the only one.

Nor does Franklin's rationalization that "Hitler's aggression needed to be stopped" turn the Allied bombing campaign into anything other than what Sebald's terms imply. The Allies themselves, in the Strategic Bombing Survey, demonstrated that the air raids achieved little of what had been expected of them, except for killing hundreds of thousands of civilians and destroying millions of homes. In her refusal to acknowledge the corruption of the Allies by the methods of their enemies, Franklin displays the same refusal to confront the past that Sebald deplores in the Germans.

Finally, Franklin finds "incredible" this remark by Sebald about the Germans: "And the question must also be permitted as to whether their breasts did not swell with the perverse pride that no one in the history of mankind on earth had been so played upon and had withstood so much as the Germans." The hyperbole that offends her, "no one in the history of mankind on earth," should have tipped her off to Sebald's irony. The Germans' "perverse pride" in their suffering is all they have left, and yet in the Auschwitzes and Babi Yars to the east, the Jews have unwillingly claimed the terrible mantle in which the bombed-out Germans hope to wrap themselves. Unfortunately, even the use of a phrase like "so played upon and had withstood so much," which could have come from any of a hundred books about the Jews, does not spell things out sufficiently for the reviewer.

One could argue, as many nowadays do, that irony is not allowed when genocide is the subject. But Sebald's contrapuntal weaving of silence and irony about the Holocaust is surely preferable to the platitudes of journalism.

ANDY LOWRY
Brandon, Mississippi ■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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Prize Fight

TWO TYPES OF people win the Nobel Peace Prize. The first are the more obvious: People who resolve international conflicts. In 1926, Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann won for the Locarno Pact, which supposedly guaranteed the borders of Germany, Belgium, and France. In 1929, America's Frank Kellogg won for the Kellogg-Briand Pact, in which the great powers renounced war. In 1973, Henry Kissinger and Vietnam's Le Duc Tho won for ending the Vietnam War. And in 1994, Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, and Yasir Arafat won for the Oslo Peace Accord between Israel and the Palestinians.

The second type of winners promote peace in a very different way: They don't resolve conflict, they advance freedom. In 1960, the Nobel Committee honored African National Congress leader Albert Luthuli, and, in 1984, it honored Archbishop Desmond Tutu, even though both men *pursued* conflict with the apartheid state. In 1983, it selected Poland's Lech Walesa; in 1991, Burma's Aung Sun Suu Kyi; and, in 1996, East Timor's Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo and José Ramos-Horta. None of these dissidents were peacemakers in the narrow sense; some even rejected negotiations with the regimes that persecuted them. By honoring them, the Nobel Committee implied that conflicts can't truly be resolved without freedom.

Jimmy Carter falls into the first category. In explaining its decision to award Carter the prize last week, the Nobel Committee praised him for championing "mediation and international cooperation" and "respect for human rights." But in reality, Carter's career is marked by fidelity to the former over the latter. As the American Enterprise Institute's Joshua Muravchik detailed in THE NEW REPUBLIC in 1994, Carter has repeatedly praised dictators in the name of international rapprochement. In 1977, while pursuing détente with the Soviet bloc, Carter noted that "our concept of human rights is preserved in Poland." The following year he told Romania's hideous dictator, Nicolae Ceaucescu, "Our goals are the same, to have a just system of economics and politics. . . . We believe in enhancing human rights." And after leaving office, he journeyed to Pyongyang in 1994 to resolve the crisis sparked by late dictator Kim Il Sung's development of nuclear weapons. "People were very friendly and open," Carter remarked about life in arguably the most repressive country on Earth, and he noted "the reverence with which [North Koreans] look upon their leader."

It is precisely this tendency that the Nobel Committee wanted to honor this year. Some commentators have called the prize a long-delayed reward for Carter's work crafting the 1978 Camp David peace deal between Israel and Egypt. But this was hardly the logical year to honor that achievement, given that Israeli-Egyptian relations are at an all-time low. What the committee really wanted to honor was the principle that American presidents should mediate conflicts, not initiate them. It skipped over Afghanistan's Hamid Karzai, presumably because that would have legitimized America's war on terrorism. And it honored Carter's peacemaking as a pointed contrast to George W. Bush's prospective war in Iraq.

The Nobel Committee has now awarded the Peace Prize twice since September 11. And with its selections, it has articulated a view of the post-September 11 world. It sees a clash between Islam and the West that must be stopped through negotiated settlements like Locarno, Oslo, and the treaty ending the Vietnam War. This year it chose Carter, an American who uses moral equivalence as a tool for making peace. And last year it chose U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, a diplomat who has placed conflict resolution above human rights in Bosnia, Rwanda, and most recently Iraq. Indeed, if this year's selection was meant to signal the Nobel Committee's opposition to a U.S. attack on Baghdad, last year's presumably signaled the kind of Iraq policy it would prefer: Annan's short-lived 1998 deal with Saddam Hussein, which emasculated the U.N. inspections regime by effectively placing Iraqi presidential sites out of reach.

With its last two choices, the committee has turned its back on that other definition of peace embodied by Walesa, Tutu, and Suu Kyi. Viewed from that other tradition, the post-September 11 world looks not like a conflict between Islam and the West but a conflict *within* the Islamic world, a conflict in which peace is best achieved not through negotiated settlements but through the advance of freedom. In 1983, when the Nobel Committee chose Walesa, it signaled that totalitarianism, not the cold war, was the problem and that freedom was the answer, not détente. Today it could have sent the same message by choosing one of the many dissidents suffering in relative obscurity under the dictatorships of the Muslim world. It could have chosen Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the Egyptian pro-democracy activist recently thrown back in prison for challenging Hosni Mubarak's repression. It could have chosen Dr. Sima Samar, who ran schools and health clinics for refugee Afghan girls denied education and medicine by the Taliban. It could have chosen Asama Khader, Jordan's foremost crusader against honor killings. Or it could have chosen Iranian philosopher Adbolkarim Soroush, targeted by Tehran's mullahs for advocating separation of mosque and state. Rather than Carter and Annan, world figures who fly in to negotiate with dictators in their palaces, it could have chosen one of the men or women who suffer under those dictators' rule. The Muslim governments that praised Annan's and Carter's selections would have howled with outrage. But they would have howled for the same reason the governments of South Africa, Poland, and Burma howled when their dissidents won the prize: Because the world was no longer indifferent to their peoples' plight.

Nobel Peace Prizes are judgements at a moment in time. But for the prize to maintain its prestige, those judgments must be borne out by history. In the years before World War II, the committee honored the signers of Locarno and Kellogg-Briand, treaties now regarded as historical jokes. But it also provoked Germany's wrath by awarding the 1935 prize to Carl von Ossietzky, a journalist and anti-Nazi activist who learned of his selection in a concentration camp. During the cold war it selected Kissinger, the most amoral of American statesmen, and Le Duc Tho, who went on to lead Hanoi's invasions of South Vietnam and Cambodia. Once again, however, the committee redeemed itself by disregarding objections from Moscow and Warsaw and honoring Andrei Sakharov in 1975 and Walesa in 1983. Perhaps one day the Nobel Committee will realize that the lesson of this new era in international affairs is likely to be the same as the last two: That real peace comes when tyranny ends. I just wish it weren't taking so long.

PETER BEINART

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Knowledge Gap

WHEN CIA DIRECTOR GEORGE J. Tenet declassified the assessment of the threat from Baghdad last week, the media gasped. Tenet wrote to Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Bob Graham that Saddam Hussein "appears to be drawing a line short" of attacking the United States imminently, deploying his weapons of mass destruction, or collaborating with Al Qaeda. Reporters and pundits alike seized on the announcement as a last-minute smoking gun, undermining the case for war. *The New York Times*' Michael R. Gordon summarized Tenet's analysis in a front-page story: Iraq, he wrote, "has little reason to provoke Washington to march on Baghdad." Maureen Dowd crowed that the CIA believes "Iraq is not an urgent threat." *The Nation*'s David Corn explained that Representative Jim McDermott's notorious allegation that George W. Bush "would mislead the American people" has now "been confirmed." If only Tenet had not waited until the "11th hour" to tell the truth about Iraq, lamented *The American Prospect*'s Harold Meyerson in *The Washington Post*, perhaps Congress would not have voted for war.

What the breathless commentators seem not to have noticed is that Tenet's "revelation" isn't a revelation at all: CIA dovishness on Iraq is nothing new. Indeed, the Agency's reluctance to confront Saddam dates back to the aftermath of the Gulf war, when the CIA grew opposed to assisting the Kurdish and Shia rebellions against the dictator. A decade later, commenting on the merits of containment in 2000—after a full year without U.N. inspections—Frank Anderson, the CIA's Near East Division chief from 1991 to 1994, called the policy "a magnificent success, or at least, certainly, an acceptable success." (Anderson has a reputation as one of the most *hawkish* CIA voices on Iraq. Last December one anonymous CIA analyst told *Salon.com* that the proposed campaign against Saddam was a "pathology" afflicting administration hawks.

And it's not just that the CIA's position on Iraq is long-standing; it has also frequently been wrong. In the 1970s, James Critchfield—who spent a decade as the CIA's Near East Division chief—believed (as he later admitted in an interview) that Saddam's drive to technologically modernize Iraq meant that he "might be brought along" into working with the United States. That kind of wishful thinking by U.S. intelligence helped convince Reagan administration policymakers to assist Saddam's war against Iran in the 1980s. In July 1990, when Saddam began amassing troops on the Kuwaiti border, the CIA advised the first Bush administration that Saddam was bluffing to gain a stronger hand in OPEC. Despite its own satellite images of the Iraqi mobilization, the Agency didn't realize its mistake until hours before Saddam attacked. U.S. intelligence also believed that Iraq was years away from developing nuclear weapons. But the 1994 defection of Khidhir Hamza, the head of Saddam's nuclear program, proved otherwise. "[T]hey had no idea how far we'd gotten with the bomb," Hamza wrote in his 2000 autobiography. "It sounded to me as if they'd been lulled by Saddam's phony documents, or blinded by his concealment schemes, or numbed by a stream of low-level defectors."

Even when the CIA has grasped the extent of Saddam's arsenal, it still hasn't wanted to do much about it. In September 1994, then-Director R. James Woolsey warned that Iraq was "still hiding Scud missiles, chemical munitions, and its entire biological weapons warfare program." And yet the CIA still advised against supporting a domestic insurgency, arguing that a stable Saddam was better than the alternative. Likewise, in 2000, the CIA reported that Saddam was rebuilding the missile factories destroyed in America's December 1998 bombing campaign. None of this stopped the CIA from backing a porous containment policy in interagency discussions throughout this summer.

None of this means the CIA doesn't have the right to its opinion about Iraq. But that opinion isn't new. And the historical record shows that Langley isn't intellectually or morally infallible. Who thought the antiwar left would need to be convinced of that? ■

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NOTEBOOK

WITH DUE CONSIDERATION TO AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC CIVILIZATION: "The Power, the Name, and the Word": the very title of the article bespoke high intellectual seriousness. It also bespoke the dogmatic left-wing fustian of Carlos Fuentes, who published this small masterpiece of exhausted progressivism in the Mexican newspaper *Reforma* on September 27. Fuentes argued that "the totalitarian dictatorships of the past century having been buried by their own multitudinous excesses and atrocious crimes, we may be entering a far more insidious and modern form of authoritarianism." The tyranny to which he refers is the presidency of George W. Bush. What follows are excerpts of Fuentes's piece, offered with alacrity to readers and aficionados of contemporary anti-Americanism who may not want to wait until *Harper's* gets around to translating it. The great writer writes: "Today, it is not about exalting an individual, a führer, a duce, but an entire nation. Hitler and Stalin made the mistake, part of ancient authoritarian culture, of demanding personal homage superior to those deserved by their own nations: to exalt the name. Washington's circle of power is infinitely more capable. It shields itself within the Nation and it gives it a total and exclusive ecumenical value. ... Just as Hitler advanced in the name of the German Volk and Stalin in the name of the Proletariat, Bush claims to act in the name of the people of the United States, 'the only surviving model of human progress.' Such a declaration locates us, once more, before 'the great lie' that Hitler so astutely invoked.... The terrible thing about a declaration like Bush's is that, subliminally and pragmatically, it prepares the extinction of all models of progress that are not the American one. With all due respect, and with due consideration to the American democratic civilization: that's what Hitler and Stalin thought of their respective models. ... We have entered a new era in which an imperial government and its leaders no longer deserve historic epithets or mythic reigns. Bush Il Duce, Cheney the Masked One, Ashcroft the Warden, Lady Condoleezza of the Potomac, Rumsfeld the Lone Ranger, and Powell Tonto? No need. These characters represent profiles of power that are mutable, mutating, and even mindless. They can be replaced without worry. Hitler and Stalin were immovable. Bush and Cheney are not. This is the hope. That the group in charge of the White House will be expelled in November 2004." The incoherence is evident in the original Spanish, as is the comparison of Bush to Hitler and Stalin, and the mildly racist crack about Powell. Needless to say, Fuentes's piece provoked criticism, and on October 5 he responded to his critics. The really extraordinary thing is that in his response Fuentes modified his comparison of Bush to Hitler and Stalin by making it favorable to Hitler and Stalin! The *saloniste*'s legendary suavity has completely deserted him. To wit: "I don't compare Bush with Hitler and Stalin to equate them, but to distinguish them. The Nazi and Soviet dictators faced other powerful States. Today's U.S. president governs a country with no external counterforce, something that has not occurred since the height of the Roman Empire. ... But neither Hitler nor Stalin had the military power that Bush has. Next to Bush, Hitler and Stalin were but petty officers." Fuentes's conclusion is that "no, Bush is neither Hitler nor Stalin. But he has more power than they. This is the danger." So are we to prefer the weak Hitler to the strong Bush? The answer is clear: We are never again to take the addled Fuentes seriously about anything.

THE CONNIE CON, CONTINUED: Earlier this month we pointed out the shamelessness of Maryland Congresswoman Connie Morella's campaign ad declaring her "the most independent voice in Congress" (see Notebook, October 7). We can understand the strategy, given that Morella is a Republican struggling to survive in a Democratic-leaning district. But it's an utterly dishonest one: When push came to shove last year, Morella caved to her GOP masters and supported the Bush tax cut, which she had roundly criticized on the campaign trail the previous fall. Now comes further evidence of Morella's ridiculous I'm-not-really-a-Republican game. As *The Washington Post*'s E.J. Dionne reports, voters in her district recently received a campaign mailing declaring that "Connie Morella doesn't represent a political party, she represents *us*." Whence did this particular mailing originate? Why, the National Republican Congressional Committee, the official campaign arm of the party. Kind of says it all, doesn't it? Actually, no. It gets worse. Morella has also launched an attack ad against her opponent, liberal State Senator Chris Van Hollen, which paints him as a conservative, declaring, "To hear this guy talk, you'd think *he* was the Republican." A Republican candidate arguing that you shouldn't vote for a Democrat because he's too much like a Republican—somewhere, Orwell is laughing.

MAKE WAR, NOT WAR: Torn between their desire to appear tough on foreign policy and their fear of alienating liberal voters, a number of Democrats came up with a tortuous rationale to vote for last week's resolution authorizing President Bush to take action against Iraq—a way to be simultaneously pro- and antiwar, or at least prowar and anti-Bush. The idea is that, by giving the president bipartisan support, the Democrats strengthen Bush's hand in the U.N., increasing the likelihood of an outcome other than unilateral U.S. action. As Hillary Clinton put it, her vote in favor of the resolution made a strong U.N. "more likely and, therefore, war less likely." And while this formulation does have a somewhat, well, Clintonian ring to it, it is not without a certain logic. As Jonathan Chait argued in these pages last week, "If forced to choose between tough inspections and nothing, the allies have shown they prefer nothing. If forced to choose between tough inspections and

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unilateral war, it now looks as though they will choose inspections" (see "False Alarm," October 21). But that position only makes sense if one believes that if the U.N. fails to act, unilateral U.S. action is preferable to no action at all. And judging from Massachusetts Senator John Kerry's comments at a Democratic dinner in Arizona last weekend, he for one doesn't. Kerry, who has been an aggressive critic of the Bush administration's Iraq policy but nonetheless voted in favor of last week's resolution, said that a unilateral strike "would be one of the great catastrophic mistakes of our time, and I will oppose it." He then argued, momentarily, "Don't for an instant believe the president has some great free hand" as a result of the resolution, before conceding, "He has a free hand to make a catastrophic mistake." So let's see if we can follow this: A senator who thinks unilateral action would be a "catastrophic mistake" has given a president he dislikes explicit authority to make that mistake and is retaining the right to oppose him if he does. It's not much of a foreign policy, but given Kerry's presidential ambitions it makes for a frightfully cunning electoral strategy.

FATHER KNOWS BEST: When Noelle Bush was arrested in January for trying to purchase Xanax with a fraudulent prescription, her father, Florida Governor Jeb Bush, was appropriately restrained in his comments. "We ask the public and the media to respect our daughter's privacy at this difficult time so that we can help our daughter." Eight months later, when Orlando police announced that workers at a rehab center where Noelle was seeking treatment had allegedly found a piece of crack cocaine in her shoe, Bush once again asked the press to respect his 25-year-old daughter's privacy. "This is a private issue as it relates to my daughter and myself and my wife," Bush said before refusing to answer reporters' questions on the subject. But this week—as he tried to rebound from a recent gaffe about his "devious plan" to get around a state education referendum and lift himself out of a dead-heat race with Democratic challenger Bill McBride—Bush evidently decided he could use a little humanizing, and so he unburdened himself to reporter Jamie Gangel on NBC's "Today" show. Answering no fewer than ten questions about Noelle, Bush talked about the progress of his daughter's recovery ("[S]ince February ... she's been drug-seeking, but she's been drug-free"); about how he has dealt with her addiction ("[I]t's really hard as a father"); and about his advice to other parents of addicts ("I think you have to balance unconditional love with a recognition ... that the change has to occur from within"). But Bush saved his most poignant words for Noelle herself. "The bad news, or the tough news, is that she has to do this under the lights," he said, without irony, on the studio set of the "Today" show. "[Y]ou know, it makes it harder. It just makes it harder for everybody." Indeed. ■

INSIDE THE BOX | Bruce Reed

WAR VOTE
October, but no surprise, as Congress approves Bush war resolution. Voters yawn: "Who have you fought for us lately?"

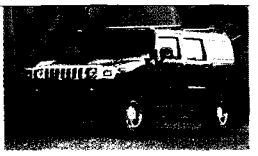
CAVE MAN

Broadcast of recent letter with bin Laden's signature raises new doubts about fate of Al Qaeda leader. White House says bin Laden is "dead or alive," just like the president promised.

CAMPAIGN TRAIL
Republicans and Democrats put off legislating until after the election so they can rush home to blame each other for getting nothing done. At last, a war both sides can get behind.

FALL LINEUP

Networks don't like preemption, refuse to air Bush speech. New mission for U.N. inspectors: Make sure Saddam has cable.

FUEL SELL

Bush administration supports auto-industry suit to block California law promoting electric and hybrid cars. Rationale: How can we send our boys off to war over oil if we won't do our part to use it here at home?

POLITICAL WIVES
Candidate for governor in Arizona attacks opponents as soft on polygamy. So much for eliminating the marriage penalty!

WAR AND PEACE

Nobel committee gives Carter Peace Prize to blast Bush for war with Iraq. Bad news, Mr. President: They're not giving you the Nobel in economics, either.

TURNING CRIMSON
Harvard endowment put millions into off-balance-sheet partnership with Bush's oil company. Maybe he's Harvard Business School material, after all.

BIN LADEN: REUTERS; IVS; GETTY; HUMMER: KRT; BUSH: REUTERS

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How to time war in Iraq.
Storm Window

By SPENCER ACKERMAN

AMONG THE ASSUMPTIONS underlying the war plans that landed on the president's desk last month was this: An attack on Iraq must happen during the Iraqi winter. Otherwise, Pentagon thinking goes, the long days of sunlight will undermine the night-vision and satellite technologies that give us a critical edge, and the brutally hot Iraqi spring and summer will make it unbearable to wear the bulky gear U.S. troops need to guard against chemical or biological attack. This race-to-the-deadline rationale, which is undoubtedly influencing the White House's diplomatic efforts at the United Nations, has gained traction in the media as well. On September 13 a headline in *The Christian Science Monitor* explained, "WHY WINTER IS BEST, TACTICALLY, FOR IRAQ STRIKE." *The Washington Times* reported one week later that a strike beginning in February and ending in April "would give United States and its allies optimum fighting weather before the oppressive heat" sets in. And *The New York Times* reiterated on September 21 that the Pentagon considers January and February the key moments for an offensive.

But the widespread assumption that the United States has to fight this war in the next several months—or else wait a year—may not be justified. Certainly cooler weather would ease the burden on troops. But technological improvements and some fresh military calculations should cast doubt on the "winter window" theory. "The overall bottom line is, I think, we could operate any months of the year," says retired Real Admiral Stephen H. Baker, now with the Center for Defense Information. "Our capabilities in all weather ... are better than anything else on the planet." Which means the choice between a winter war and a spring or summer war is not a choice between victory and failure.

The first reason the United States supposedly has to attack Iraq in winter, before the intense rainstorms and flooding of March begin, is visibility. But in the decade since the Gulf war, the U.S. military has developed a series of technological innovations designed to expand the fightable calendar. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) technology is now nearly ubiquitous in U.S. planes, ships, and tanks. "GPS for ground forces was a new thing" in the Gulf war, notes James Jay Carafano, a retired Army lieutenant colonel and former executive editor of the National Defense University's *Joint Force Quarterly*. "Everyone followed the one guy with a GPS receiver. ... That's all changed." Also, thanks to laser-guided bombs, as Gulf war veteran and retired Air Force General Merrill McPeak has said, the military can hit a fixed location "in any weather."

The second assumption underlying the winter window is that troops can't function in the summer heat while wearing the heavy gear necessary to protect them against chemical or biological weapons. But the new generation of protective garments is lighter and less cumbersome than those available a decade ago. The last generation of Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) clothing—called the Battle Dress Overgarment (BDO)—weighed about 15 pounds, much of that weight attributable to powdered charcoal between layers of the suit and to the thick material surrounding the charcoal. A reporter for *The Philadelphia Inquirer* who tried on the BDO in November 2000 began sweating before putting on his over-jacket and boots. The new generation of protective suits, called the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology (JSLIST), by contrast, does more with less. The JSLIST does everything the BDO did but weighs a bit less, and, thanks mostly to its streamlined bulk, significantly reduces heat stress—a crucial upgrading for desert operations. "It's a significant improvement in what [soldiers] wore previously," observes Michael Powers, a military technology analyst with the Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute. According to an inventory review at the end of August, the Pentagon has 1,500,000 JSLIST suits in stock. In other words, more than enough for the estimated invasion force of slightly over 100,000.

There is a third reason U.S. troops could withstand the summer: training. Plans leaked to *The Washington Post* indicate that Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is urging U.S. Central Command leader General Tommy Franks to "consider an invasion force that ... relies more on Special Operations troops than traditional Army thinking would dictate." Special Operations forces train year-round in conditions specific to their likely field of battle. And since the Gulf war, the military has maintained a permanent desert footprint of roughly 20,000 troops. As a result, U.S. forces have vastly more experience training for desert warfare than before the Gulf war, when the weather-window issue first appeared. Special Operations forces—who also have the benefit of cultural acclimation—were a vital component of the war in Afghanistan, and their value in Iraq is likely to increase. "The last guys you'd worry about doing operations year-round would be [Special Operations] forces," Carafano says. "They have guys who train for this year-round."

There are several reasons to believe a war in Iraq would depend on just this type of force. The Pentagon is placing a premium on light, swift, and targeted operations against sites important to the survival of the Iraqi regime rather than the massive force the generals typically prefer, which means Special Operations forces will likely do much of the heavy lifting in Iraq. In fact, last weekend Rumsfeld told the generals to go back to the drawing board for plans that emphasize more agile forces. What's more, Special Operations forces would be best-suited to liaise with Kurdish guerrillas in northern Iraq and Shia rebels in the south, as well as to scout out possible chemical and biological weapons sites for quick raids in anticipation of air strikes and ground-force deployments. Other specialties of Special Operations forces include destroying communications sites; urban warfare, such as the

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sort that might occur in Baghdad; and psychological operations, such as encouraging defections. Some elite Special Forces units have already been ordered to separate from the military and join CIA teams, most likely to perform such battlefield preparations.

It's also worth considering at least one way summer warfare could actually *help* our troops. It's generally argued that we'd fare better in winter thanks to the shorter daylight hours, which play to the technological strengths of the night-vision-equipped U.S. military. Yet in a 1992 assessment of Iraq's nonconventional weapons threat, Army Colonel Jeffrey D. McCausland—who commanded battalions in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and briefly served under Bill Clinton as the Director for Defense Policy and Arms Control on the National Security Council Staff—noted that to be truly effective, chemical weapons must keep a region contaminated after their release. As he wrote, chemicals generally evaporate quickly in daylight while "a persistent attack at sunset will have lasting effects all night." To a lesser extent, biological agents suffer from the same vulnerability. Therefore, if U.S. soldiers were exposed to chemical and biological weapons without their protective gear—the worst-case scenario for an Iraq invasion—the longer daylight hours of spring and summer would likely mean fewer casualties.

None of this diminishes the value of conducting missions in temperatures lower than 107 degrees, the average maximum temperature in Iraq between July and September. But if necessary the United States could likely overthrow Saddam Hussein even then. George W. Bush and Tony Blair may be racing to build up international and domestic support for a possible war, but they don't need to race against the calendar. ■

Minnesota and our dystopian political future.

New Money

By MICHELLE COTTLE

SINCE THE DEMISE of the Soviet Union, red-baiting has pretty much fallen out of favor in American politics. Particularly these days, with wild-eyed Islamists holding the national imagination hostage, labeling someone a commie sympathizer just doesn't resonate like it used to. But that didn't stop the Minnesota-based Citizens Opposed to Racism and Discrimination (CORAD) from sponsoring an ad in mid-August that so shamelessly accused Democratic Senator Paul Wellstone of pinko tendencies that "Hardball"'s Chris Matthews dubbed it "the nastiest TV ad this campaign season."

In the 60-second spot—which most stations refused to air—the ultraconservative CORAD painted Wellstone as a rich, corrupt, hypocritical, lying scoundrel interested primarily in his own enrichment. The ad's female announcer, however, took special care to denounce the senator's plot to force Americans into a "communist-style health care plan." Lest anyone miss her point, a Chinese flag materialized behind a snapshot of a grinning Wellstone, as the words "COMMUNISTIC HEALTHCARE" spun onto the screen in bold white letters. It was an impressively in-your-face assault, even for the state that brought us Governor Ventura.

In CORAD's defense, the group could be excused for thinking its message needed a little extra oomph to stand out in Minnesota's increasingly crowded field of ads. With Wellstone among the Senate's most vulnerable incumbents this election—and with control of the entire chamber riding on a few key races—outside groups across the country have been spending big and playing rough in an effort to sway Minnesota voters. Exact dollar figures are hard to come by, but pretty much everyone agrees that expenditures stretch into the millions, if not tens of millions. The Sierra Club and the AFL-CIO have run spots praising Wellstone, while a range of conservative groups, including the National Federation of Independent Businesses and the United Seniors Association, have taken aim at the senator's big-government economic record. And while arguably the most caustic voice in the mix, CORAD has hardly been the most dogged. That distinction belongs to the Virginia-based Americans for Job Security, which—in denouncing Wellstone's vote against permanently repealing the estate tax—has run a series of radio and print ads, sponsored a direct mail campaign, and, this summer, hired a plane to circle the Minnesota State Fair with a banner calling on the senator to "STOP TAXING THE DEAD."

With the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reforms set to take effect November 6, what's happening in Minnesota now may be a preview of the kind of aggressive advocacy likely to spike across the country in the coming years—to the detriment of voters. For starters, say critics, independent interest groups are not constrained by the same disclosure laws or accountability concerns as are the candidates and parties, resulting in nastier, less accurate ads. Depending on their tax status, groups like trade associations and religious organizations can skirt political disclosure laws and keep their donor lists a secret. So even when you know the name of the group that funded an ad, it's often impossible to tell exactly who is behind it, complains Mike Erlandson, chair of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (DFL). Their warm and fuzzy names reveal nothing of their agenda. For instance, notes Republican Sarah Janecek, co-editor of the newsletter "Politics in Minnesota," Americans for Job Security is basically a front for the insurance companies. This anonymity, says Lawrence Jacobs, a political science professor at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, enables third-party ads to be "this kind of nameless, faceless attack—the assassin's bullet at night." What's more, unlike candidates, independent advocacy groups feel free to play dirty politics without fear of damaging their own reputations. "When a candidate is running his or her own ads, their name is associated with it or their face is on the screen, and they're

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more concerned about damaging their reputation," says Jacobs. By contrast, says Janecek, outside groups "just slash and burn."

Interest groups also tend to be more concerned about spotlighting a pet cause than about pitching a particular candidate to voters. "Even if they lose, they want to leave a mark about their message," says Steven Schier, professor of political science at Carleton College. "They want to change the agenda and have issues talked about—whether or not it helps the candidate." "Imagine a right-to-life campaign coming into Minnesota to hammer away at Wellstone," offers Jacobs. That might thrill hard-core conservatives, "but it could be detrimental to [Wellstone opponent Norm] Coleman's efforts in the suburbs, which tend to lean Republican but have lots of folks who feel strongly about a woman's right to choice."

The result is that candidates and parties spend more and more time issuing nasty responses to increasingly nasty attacks—often about peripheral issues—from various outside groups. In early August, decrying a radio ad sponsored by the United Seniors Association, the Wellstone campaign issued a press release headlined: "RIGHT WING COLEMAN BACKERS ATTACK WELLSTONE ON AIR." Shortly thereafter, the DFL responded to the CORAD ad with their own press release, announcing that the party would file a complaint with the Federal Election Commission "AGAINST GROUP RUNNING FALSE ILLEGAL ATTACK AD FOR COLEMAN." Coleman, meanwhile, had to loudly deny that he had played any role in these ads. For their part, voters need a flowchart to figure out who is really behind which messages and what their ultimate agenda might be. Says Schier, "It really wreaks havoc on any attempt by the electorate to hold officials or candidates accountable."

McCain-Feingold is expected to only make things worse. By slashing the amount parties can collect and spend on candidates' behalf, it will likely divert a river of political money into the coffers of outside interest groups. "One of my biggest concerns all along, as we continue to restrict money going directly to political parties and candidates, is outside groups having more and more influence," says the DFL's Erlandson. The notion that McCain-Feingold is going to clean up the system "is complete bullshit," asserts Janecek. The money will find its way back in, she insists—if not through the parties, then through the interest groups.

Ironically, it was Wellstone who led the charge to prevent outside interests from wielding undue influence in a post-McCain-Feingold world. As the bill wound its way through the Senate, Wellstone attached an amendment prohibiting the use of soft money for certain types of third-party ads in the final days of an election. The amendment, however, is widely considered the piece of McCain-Feingold most likely to be struck down by the courts as a violation of the First Amendment. "It's not clear to me that we're cleaning up any clutter at all," sighs Schier, noting that the more outside money that flows into a race, the harder it becomes for voters to figure out what is true, what is false, and who's to blame for the distortions. Want a sneak peek at the future of American politics? asks Schier: "It's Minnesota 2002." ■

Disney's copyright conquest.

Mouse Trap

By JEFFREY ROSEN

IMAGINE THIS: WHILE interviewing students for a documentary about inner-city schools, a filmmaker accidentally captures a television playing in the background, in which you can just make out three seconds of an episode of "The Little Rascals." He can't include the interview in his film unless he gets permission from the copyright holder to use the three seconds of TV footage. After dozens of phone calls to The Hal Roach Studio, he is passed along to a company lawyer who tells him that he can include the fleeting glimpse of Alfalfa in his nonprofit film, but only if he's willing to pay $25,000. He can't, and so he cuts the entire scene.

Today every American who wants to use copyrighted material on his or her personal website—even in passing—is in the same position as the documentary filmmaker. And if the Supreme Court upholds the Copyright Term Extension Act of 1998, or the CTEA, these restrictions on free speech on the Internet will continue for decades to come. The act extended the copyright term for original works by 20 years—from the life of the author plus 50 years to the life of the author plus 70 years. This makes a vast number of films, photographs, and books from the 1920s and 1930s unavailable to the public for another generation. And this dramatic constriction of the public domain comes at a time when the Internet is making possible an explosion of creativity, as digital archives put film clips, MP3 files, and text on the Web. The Internet converts every reader into a potential publisher, enabling scholars, historians, or interested amateurs to put together innovative presentations about, for example, the politics and culture of the New Deal using clips of FDR and Woody Guthrie. If the CTEA remains in place, however, none of these clips can be posted unless their copyrights are cleared—an impossibility for the average Internet publisher, given the prohibitive expenses of tracking down each of the original copyright holders. The CTEA also prevents scholars from quoting works from the '20s and '30s on the Web because of the difficulty in obtaining permission. "If we lose, the burden on creating and restructuring content on the Internet will be extremely high for another generation," Stanford Law School's Lawrence Lessig told me after arguing the copyright case before the Supreme Court last week.

During oral arguments the Supreme Court seemed to understand that the CTEA was a naked giveaway to the heirs of Walt Disney, who had persuaded Congress to extend copyright terms for their own private benefit. In 1998, after heavy lobbying by the Walt Disney Company—which feared the imminent return of Mickey Mouse and other copyrighted

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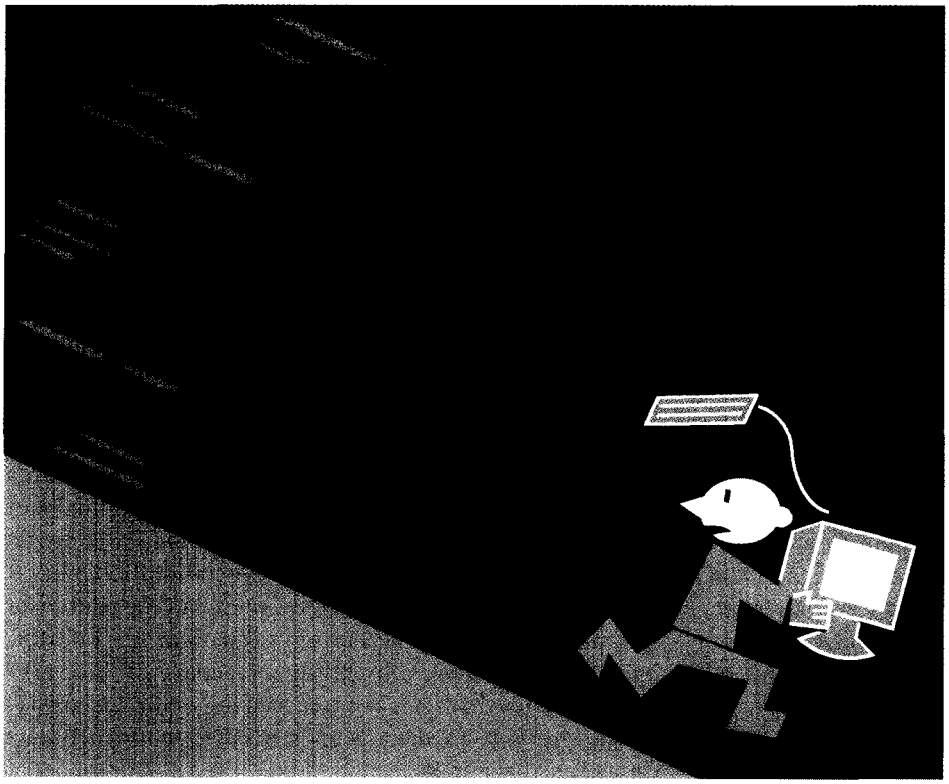
Disney icons to the public domain and with it the loss of lucrative licensing fees—Congress extended the copyright term for an additional 20 years. That's bad enough on its face. But before the Supreme Court, Lessig argued that upholding the CTEA would grant Congress the power to pass future retroactive copyright extensions to benefit wealthy special interests—making it possible for Disney's copyrights to be extended and re-extended perpetually. This, he argued, violates the plain language of the copyright clause of the Constitution, which grants Congress the power "to promote the Progress of Science" by securing authors the exclusive rights to their writings "for limited Times."

But although they recognized it as a bad law, Chief Justice William Rehnquist and his colleagues expressed skepticism about the constitutional basis for striking down this flamboyant piece of special interest legislation. "We've said there was a general grant" of power to Congress "and that Congress was free to run with it in many respects," Rehnquist told Lessig in an uncharacteristic burst of deference to Congress. In fact, the constitutional arguments against the CTEA are the same ones Rehnquist has made the centerpiece of his judicial legacy: that the Constitution grants Congress limited powers, which may only be exercised for carefully enumerated purposes. Seen in this light, the case for striking down the CTEA is actually stronger than the case for striking down the Violence Against Women Act, the Brady Bill, the Gun-Free School Zones Act, and other federal laws that Rehnquist and his conservative colleagues have held exceed Congress's enumerated powers. If the Court upholds the CTEA while continuing to strike down far less objectionable statutes in the name of limited federal government, Rehnquist's crusade to limit Congress's power will be clearly revealed to be based not on devotion to constitutional text and history but on the political and economic interests that a given law serves.

LESSIG (WHO IS my friend and has written for this magazine) argues that the copyright clause, as originally understood, authorized Congress to grant an exclusive monopoly to authors and writers for a specific purpose: to promote creativity. The terms must be limited, the framers insisted, because they recognized that perpetual monopolies over creative works could inhibit creativity by preventing works from entering the public domain. (In contrast to today's life-plus-70-years copyright term, the original term in 1790 granted copyrights for only 14 years with the possibility of one optional 14-year extension.) At the Supreme Court argument, the justices seemed to agree that the CTEA will almost certainly inhibit far more creative speech than it promotes. By definition, as Justice Sandra Day O'Connor recognized, a retrospective copyright extension such as the CTEA *can't* encourage the creation of new works since it applies to works already in existence. And a prospective copyright extension that adds 20 years—long after the death of the author—adds only the most remote additional incentive for him to create during his lifetime: As Justice Stephen Breyer noted, for an 80-year-old composer like Verdi, the prospective of a few more pennies in royalties "an extra twenty years way down the pike" won't make a noticeable difference in spurring him on to finish *Otello*.

In Congress, defenders of the CTEA came up with only one argument for how the act might promote creativity. They testified that the act could encourage major studios to digitize hit films from the '20s and '30s by extending their economic value. But this argument is not convincing. As the head of The Hal Roach Studio—the leading restorer of *Laurel and Hardy* and other films from the '20s and '30s—argued in a principled brief that clashed with his financial interests, the CTEA extends the copyright for 19,000 films made between 1923 and 1942. Of these, only 5,000 continue to earn royalties, which means that the remaining 14,000 have little economic value but are of great historical interest. Many of these are "orphan" films whose copyright holders are very difficult to track down today. The CTEA makes restorations of such films economically prohibitive by requiring nonprofit restorers to hire private detectives to track down the lost copyright holders for the music, the credits, and so forth. As a result, the orphan films will continue to rot unwatched in



STEPHEN SAVAGE

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the Library of Congress. And even if the CTEA actually did increase the incentive to restore these films, as Congress unconvincingly concluded, the preservation of 14,000 films hardly justifies the removal of more than 400,000 other creative works—books, poems, songs, and photographs—from the public domain.

In the hope of appealing to the conservative justices, Lessig argued that the text and original understanding of the copyright clause suggest that the CTEA is exactly the kind of special interest monopoly the framers of the Constitution meant to prohibit. The framers wanted to forbid the practice of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English monarchs, who granted indefinite publishing monopolies to court favorites not to publish new works but to print existing classics—such as Shakespeare and Milton—that had long been enjoyed by the public. Like the Disney act, this raw political patronage suppressed speech that should be in the public domain. Parliament broke up these monopolies in 1710 by imposing term limits on copyrights; when the Constitution was drafted, the framers looked to the English example in specifying that copyrights could only be granted "for limited Times."

But far from being persuaded by Lessig's argument, Chief Justice Rehnquist suggested it was unprecedented. "Every morning," Lessig recalls, "I wake up with an image of the Chief Justice in my head saying, 'Well, counsel, maybe the fact that nobody raised this question for one hundred fifty years indicates that there is no issue here.'" But there are, Lessig notes, several reasons that no one has challenged retrospective copyright extensions in the past. In the eighteenth century "exclusive rights" in intellectual property meant only the right to print and publish. Today, by contrast, thanks to a vast expansion of copyright protections in 1976, a single copyright includes the right to control derivative works, public performances, and display rights. When copyright only regulated commercial publishers, there was no reason to object to a retrospective copyright extension because publishers, on balance, benefited from the extension more than they were harmed by it. By contrast, in the Internet age, every citizen is a potential publisher, and every publication on the Internet runs the risk of clashing with the tangle of rights that copyright law now protects. Today, a retrospective copyright extension benefits a handful of commercial publishers who hold the most valuable copyrights—such as Disney and AOL—but it harms the millions of citizens, scholars, librarians, and students who want to use historical material in ways that aren't commercially viable.

ANOTHER REASON THAT nobody "raised this question" until now is Rehnquist's own judicial legacy. From the New Deal until 1995, the Supreme Court almost never struck down an act of Congress as exceeding Congress's constitutional powers. But beginning in 1995, thanks to Rehnquist's vision of limited federal government, the Supreme Court has dramatically switched course, striking down as many as 26 laws for exceeding Congress's enumerated powers. Many of these opinions were written by Rehnquist, such as the case in 1995 where he said that Congress had no power to pass the Gun-Free School Zones Act because it didn't "substantially affect" interstate commerce. In this and other opinions, Rehnquist was openly contemptuous of the very claim that the government is now pressing in the CTEA case: that Congress should have broad discretion to decide the limits of its own power.

Taking Rehnquist at his word, Lessig argues that the case against the CTEA is far more powerful than the case for invalidating the Gun-Free School Zones Act or the Violence Against Women Act. The reason the Supreme Court got out of the business of striking down acts of Congress in the mid-twentieth century was that it presumed that economic interests could ordinarily fend for themselves in the political process. And there is no claim that champions of gun rights or opponents of federalizing state criminal law can't defend their own interests in Congress. But there is an undeniable case that the public interest isn't adequately represented in the political process when rich donors like Disney lobby Congress to milk their own copyrights for as long as possible. The CTEA is precisely the kind of special interest monopoly that judges throughout American history have invalidated as favoring private interests over the public interest.

By the same token, liberal justices such as Breyer and David Souter, who are ordinarily (and properly) skeptical of imposing limits on Congress's power, could vote to strike down the CTEA while continuing to object to the Court's decision to strike down federal laws under the commerce clause. The commerce clause of the Constitution has no explicit limits at all—it gives Congress the power to "regulate Commerce ... among the several States"—while the copyright clause has explicit limitations: It gives Congress the power to grant exclusive rights "for limited Times" for the purpose of promoting creativity. Breyer and Souter could write an opinion saying that the Court should only enforce limits on Congress's power when the Constitution is explicit about those limits, as in this case.

Decades from now Rehnquist and his conservative colleagues will be remembered above all for their decisions restricting Congress's power. These decisions have been legitimately criticized for being based more on an abstract devotion to states' rights than on the text and history of the Constitution. Now the Court has before it a law that is constitutionally offensive on every level: It clashes with the explicit limits on Congress's power set out in the text and original understanding of the copyright clause, it represents a naked transfer of wealth to a handful of greedy heirs of pop-culture icons from the '20s, and it threatens to constrict public domain on the Internet for generations to come. If the Court sets limits on Congress's power in the context of commerce but not in the context of copyright, the only difference would be one of political perspective. If there ever were a case in which it makes sense to hope that the conservatives are true to their purported strict constructionist principles, this is it. ■

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The White House stalls on smallpox.

Bad Reaction

By Shannon Brownlee

Federal health officials have been doing a lot of bioterrorism planning lately. Last month they released a 100-page manual telling states in exacting detail how to vaccinate the entire country in six days in the event of a smallpox outbreak—right down to instructions for providing enough bathroom facilities for waiting vaccinees. This month they've added a new plan for vaccinating citizens *before* a smallpox outbreak. The president's top bioterrorism advisers told reporters earlier this month that they want to offer voluntary vaccines to 500,000 health care workers as early as the end of the year, followed by ten million more to first-responders by early 2004. The vaccine will be offered to the general public as soon as a new version has been licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Immunizing as many citizens as possible before an outbreak makes sense, if only because trying to vaccinate nearly 300 million Americans in less than one week is probably impossible—no matter how many vaccination stations and Port-A-Potties states have at the ready. More to the point, smallpox can spread like wildfire through a population that has little or no immunity, so vaccinating people beforehand will slow down an epidemic in the unlikely event that one should occur.

There's just one hole in these plans: The president's bioterrorism advisers haven't figured out how to protect the thousands of Americans who are likely to suffer serious reactions to the vaccine. Data from the 1960s, when smallpox vaccination was routine, shows that an estimated 15 people per million who are vaccinated will come down with life-threatening reactions, and about one to two per million will die. But those numbers come from the days before AIDS, chemotherapy, and anti-rejection drugs for people who have had organ transplants, all of which weaken the immune system and could make people acutely vulnerable to the vaccine as well as to smallpox itself. (It's a sad irony that the people who need the vaccine most may not be able to safely receive it.) Nowadays, the number of serious reactions could be much higher, but nobody really knows.

So far, two drugs have shown promise in treating vaccine side effects. Unfortunately, one is available in very limited supplies, and the other is not available at all. That is not likely to change anytime soon because the pharmaceutical industry has little incentive to develop anti-bioterror drugs. Like tanks or aircraft carriers, such drugs have no use except for national defense and no market except a government stockpile. Pharmaceutical companies are not about to rush anti-bioterror drugs into production when there is no consumer market. The feds need to step in to protect public health. But so far—for all their supposed bioterrorism planning—they have not.

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The administration's inability to get experimental anti-bioterrorism drugs into production has been thrown into sharp relief by the prospect of vaccinating large numbers of Americans against smallpox. Every inoculation carries some risk, but smallpox vaccine is especially nasty because it's made from a live virus—called vaccinia—which is closely related to the smallpox virus itself. While vaccinia is not nearly as virulent as smallpox, it still packs a wallop for some people. The pustule at the vaccination site can spread, leaving a large open wound on people with certain skin conditions, such as eczema. But today it is the ten to 20 million immune-compromised Americans who are most at risk.

To deal with this, the administration's plans for vaccinating the country include $100 million to stockpile an old line of defense—a blood product known as vaccinia immune globulin (VIG); the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta has contracted Cangene Corporation, a Canadian company, to begin producing it. But there's not a lot of evidence that VIG can help an immune-compromised person tolerate a smallpox vaccine. "When you go back and analyze what data exist on the use of VIG, it's nothing more than testimonials," says Dr. Peter Jahrling, a virologist and chief scientific adviser at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases (USAMRIID) in Fort Detrick, Maryland. The other available treatment is cidofovir (whose trade name is Vistide), which is already on the market for treating eye infections (mainly in AIDS patients). It has been shown by Jahrling and Dr. John Huggins—also a virologist at USAMRIID—to be effective against both the smallpox virus and vaccinia. But the CDC only has access to a small stockpile of 3,500 doses—hardly enough to treat the tens of thousands of cases of side effects that might result from a mass-vaccination campaign. Worse, cidofovir can cause kidney damage, and it must be given intravenously—a distinct disadvantage if a large number of people need to receive the drug in short order during an epidemic.

The good news is that there's a new and improved version of cidofovir, called HDP-CDV, which is 100 times more potent than its predecessor. HDP-CDV can also be taken orally. Best of all, the drug appears to be less toxic than cidofovir. It does not concentrate in the kidneys—where it can cause damage—but rather in the lungs, liver, and other organs, which is where smallpox appears to do the greatest harm and where the drug can do the most good. In a recent test on mice, the drug was able to protect 95 percent of the rodents against cowpox, a closely related virus that normally kills them in eight or nine days. Scaling up from mice, Huggins estimates it would take a pill the size of an aspirin to protect

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human beings against vaccine side effects. The drug may also work against smallpox itself; in the event of an attack, we'd need it to treat citizens who are infected because they have not been vaccinated. Such results are about as good as it gets in the early stages of an experimental drug. But the drug still needs to be tested for safety in human beings, and the FDA will not license it until the agency is persuaded it actually works.

THAT'S WHERE THE trouble begins. In May a small start-up company based in San Diego, Chimerix Inc., told senior Bush administration officials that it would take on the job of testing the safety and effectiveness of HDP-CDV for FDA approval for a bargain price of $15 million. It could get the drug through the approval process and ready for industrial production in as little as one year. But there's a problem: "The government has said it is willing to support these projects, but the mechanism of who allocates the money and who makes the decisions is not apparent," says George Painter, CEO of Chimerix.

That's putting it diplomatically. In fact, nobody in the government seems to be in charge of moving a drug like HDP-CDV along quickly. All drugs, whether their final destination is pharmacy shelves or a government stockpile, must clear several hurdles on the way to being licensed by the FDA. In the "preclinical" phase, researchers tinker with a drug's chemistry in the lab, and they test it in animals. If a drug still looks promising at that point, the FDA permits the company to proceed to large-scale manufacturing and "clinical trials"—tests of the drug's safety and efficacy in human subjects. At each step along the way, pharmaceutical company managers make decisions about the drug's potential for getting through the next stage: HDP-CDV is stalled in the preclinical phase. While there are no guarantees it will be safe and effective in humans, there's no way to know without moving it into industrial production—which would create enough of the drug, with enough chemical consistency, to actually test it.

But there are no signs of an official who can move it forward. Jahrling says he has gotten calls from the Office of Homeland Security, but they have no authority to contract with a company to get the drug through clinical trials. The CDC can purchase the drug for government stockpile once it's approved by the FDA, but it has no authority to fund clinical development. The Pentagon and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)—the lead smallpox agency at the National Institutes of Health—have paid for the basic preclinical research, which is being done by Huggins's lab in conjunction with Dr. Karl Hostetler, a medical researcher at the Veterans Administration Hospital and the University of California, San Diego. The Pentagon, which currently has an agreement with another company to develop and manufacture vaccines to protect troops against more than a dozen bioterrorism agents, could conceivably contract Chimerix to ramp up industrial production of HDP-CDV and take it through clinical trials, but the Pentagon does not generally provide drugs for civilian use. That leaves NIAID, an agency more comfortable supporting basic, preclinical research than making judgment calls about when drugs are ready for the next phase of industrial development—much less contracting with a private company to carry out the work.

That bias was brought home earlier this month when NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci told reporters at a press conference that the agency was still soliciting proposals from basic researchers to tinker with the drug. "We are in the very early stages," says Dr. Carole Heilman, the director of the Division of Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at NIAID. "People are fiddling around with it," she says, testing different versions for stability at different temperatures and making slight changes in the drug's chemistry to improve the speed at which it is absorbed by the body. But fiddling with the drug in the lab will only delay our ability to prepare for a smallpox attack. "There is a big bridge to cross before [HDP-CDV] is licensed, and we at Chimerix are sitting on that bridge," says Painter. That bridge is producing HDP-CDV in industrial quantities and getting it tested on humans.

Ordinarily, even start-up biotechnology companies such as Chimerix do not need the government to pay the costs of maneuvering the FDA-approval process—and therefore don't have to go through the snail-paced bureaucracy at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—because venture capitalists are only too happy to invest in pharmaceutical research and development in exchange for a share in the profits. But there is no commercial market for a drug whose only use is for national defense. Which means investors won't be interested in Chimerix unless the government promises to help foot the development bill and buy the drug once it has gained FDA approval. But with no mechanism within the government for reviewing candidate-medicines and giving companies the green light to take them into production, and no single agency or office in charge of making such decisions, there's not much chance for the drug without a directive from the secretary of HHS or the White House.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S INABILITY to move forward on HDP-CDV does not bode well for its anti-bioterrorism efforts. The list of organisms that could be used as weapons includes viruses and bacterias for which there are few if any effective treatments. To get the necessary antidotes into the works, the administration could assign an agency or office the task of getting new compounds and vaccines into the hands of the drug industry—the people who best know how to turn them into serviceable products. Such an agency will need people with the expertise to make decisions about when an experimental drug is ready for industrial development, as well as a budget for contracting with pharmaceutical companies.

Last December, Senator Joe Lieberman introduced legislation to facilitate that process. The bill calls for giving the Office of Homeland Security the authority to set research and development priorities and to grant tax, procurement,

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patent, and liability incentives to companies willing to work on strategic drugs and vaccines. That's a start. The government will also need to indemnify companies that develop such products and take on the liability entailed in delivering them to the public—something it has been reluctant to do in the past. In return, companies will have to accept smaller margins on drugs and vaccines that have come out of federally funded labs and whose sole destination is a federal stockpile. HDP-CDV will be a test case for how well the government can work with the drug industry to protect the nation. "None of my kids are vaccinated against smallpox," says Painter. "I'd feel better with something like [HDP-CDV] around." So would a lot of Americans. ■

How the Democrats could win.

Poll Vault

By JOHN B. JUDIS

THE DEMOCRATS PROBABLY don't deserve to do well in November's elections. The party's national leaders have refused to make an issue of President Bush's tax cuts, which will threaten deficits through the decade; and many of them muffled their reservations about war with Iraq in the hope of refocusing on more politically congenial topics like prescription drugs and Social Security. The Bush administration, by contrast, has maneuvered brilliantly over the last six weeks, using the debate over Iraq to solidify the Republicans' standing as the party of national security. "[T]he President and the Republican Party are in a historic and positive position," exulted Matthew Dowd, Republican National Committee pollster and senior adviser, on October 12. On October 10, the University of Virginia's Larry Sabato predicted Republican pickups in the Senate and the House. And last week's cover story in *Barron's* was headlined, "GOP SWEEP: Republicans look increasingly likely to take the senate and hold onto the house in next month's elections."

Yet, if you look at the polling indicators that usually predict party success in midterm elections—from "right track/wrong track" opinion about the country's direction to views of which party will better handle education and the economy—they favor the Democrats. And if you look at specific races, you see indications that favor the Democrats as well. In spite of the party's timidity and the White House's political skill, the Democrats are actually in pretty good shape. If voters focus on the economy rather than national security in the remaining weeks, the Democrats may well increase their edge in the Senate, recapture the House, and dramatically reverse the Republican advantage in governorships.

Start with the measures that pollsters and political scientists typically use to predict which party is going to come out on top in national elections. When confidence in the economy and the country's overall direction is rising, the party in the White House gets the credit in national elections. When confidence is falling, the opposition gains at the polls. For instance, in November 1986, the percentage of Americans who thought the country was on the "wrong track" exceeded those who thought it was on the "right track" for the first time in four years. That fall, Democrats recaptured the Senate. In the month of August 1994, Democrats remained sanguine about their chances at the polls, but the percentage of voters who thought the country was on the wrong track jumped from 63 percent to 68 percent. That November, Republicans won the House and the Senate for the first time in 40 years. By contrast, in 1998, when voters believed by 55 to 43 percent that "things are generally going in the right direction," the party in the White House—the Democrats—picked up seats in the House and the Senate.

This year the leading indicators are heading south. In April, a Gallup poll found that 61 percent of Americans were satisfied, and 37 percent dissatisfied, with "the way things are going in the United States at this time." By September those numbers had collapsed to 47 percent satisfied and 51 percent dissatisfied. The highly regarded Ipsos-Reid surveys found a similar pattern: In April, 54 percent thought that the country was going in the "right direction" compared with 38 percent who thought otherwise. By early this month the numbers were essentially reversed, with 50 percent believing the country was on the wrong track and only 44 percent believing it was on the right track. Confidence in the economy has also plummeted. In May, Gallup found 49 percent of Americans thought the economy was "getting better" and 34 percent thought it was "getting worse." By the end of September, 52 percent thought the economy was declining, and only 33 percent thought it was improving.

Voters' perception of how the country is doing feeds their view of which party's policies they prefer. If they think the country is going in the right direction, they credit the policies of the party in power, and vice versa. Of course, voters already favored the Democrats on key domestic issues such as the environment and Social Security. More significant is what has happened in those areas of domestic policy where Republicans held an advantage. Last May, according to Gallup, voters preferred congressional Republicans to Democrats on taxes 43 percent to 36 percent; by the end of last month they preferred Democrats 50 percent to 38 percent. Last June, voters were almost evenly divided over whether congressional Democrats or Republicans could best improve education; by late September they favored Democrats by an astounding 53 percent to 31 percent. There is now no domestic policy on which voters prefer congressional Republicans to Democrats, and, except on gun control, the margins by which they prefer Democrats are well into the double digits.

The only area in which Republicans retain an advantage is national security, where voters think congressional Republicans would do a better job on foreign affairs by 49 percent to 33 percent. This perception probably depressed Democratic

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poll numbers during the congressional debate over war with Iraq, when the public and the press were focused on national security. But with the debate resolved, voters are likely in the coming weeks to return to their traditional preoccupation with domestic issues—and to their preference for Democratic approaches.

AT FIRST GLANCE the Democrats seem to have done little to merit this growing support for their domestic policies. They don't have a national program for improving education or reviving the economy. Most Democratic campaigns have been narrowly focused and uncreative: They have slammed Republican plans to privatize Social Security, they have called for including prescription-drug coverage for seniors under Medicare, and they have attacked Republicans for condoning corporate corruption.

But this timid agenda may prove surprisingly effective in today's peculiar economic climate. The American economy is not in a traditional recession, as it was during the 1982 election. Most Americans are not worried about losing their jobs right now. But they do worry that a fall in the stock market is depleting their savings and could eventually send the economy into a tailspin that would threaten their jobs. They are anxious about the future rather than the present—and that gives the Democrats' issues a particular resonance that they would not have in a boom (when voters aren't very worried about the future) or a during a deep recession (when they are fixated on immediate relief). Voters are angry about corporate corruption because it has robbed workers and stockholders of their savings. They don't want the government's savings program—Social Security—to be subject to the rise and fall of the Dow Jones index. And they worry about having to pay out their savings for rising drug costs. They prefer the simple, Democratic idea of plugging prescription-drug coverage into Medicare to the more complex—and far less generous—Republican and drug company plan of forcing seniors to pay premiums to private insurance companies for drug coverage.

And if the Democratic proposals are timid, the Republicans alternatives are either irrelevant or nonexistent. Some Republicans have resorted to the formula the party first used successfully in 1978—advocating cuts in taxes and spending while accusing the Democrats of being "tax-and-spenders." In Tennessee, Republican gubernatorial candidate Van Hilleary has attacked his Democratic opponent, Phil Bredesen, for raising property taxes three times as mayor of Nashville. In Fort Collins, Colorado, Republican congressional candidate Marilyn Musgrave has branded Democrat Stan Matsunaka "Stan the Tax Man" and "Stan Taxsunaka" because, as a state legislator, he opposed a Republican tax-cut plan. But these appeals don't resonate the way they used to. Voters no longer see tax cuts as the key to prosperity—in a poll last spring respondents said by a 72 percent to 23 percent margin that they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who promised to balance the budget than for one who promised to cut taxes. Which may help explain why most of the Republicans who are using this kind of appeal—Hilleary, Georgia Senate candidate Saxby Chambliss, and Iowa gubernatorial candidate Doug Gross to name three prominent examples—are trailing their opponents in the polls.

Most Republican candidates are turning away from traditional conservative economic appeals and instead are running Orwellian ad campaigns in which they claim that they never wanted to privatize Social Security and that they favor the Democrats' prescription-drug programs. They are denying that they ever tried to hamstring the Securities and Exchange Commission, and they are trying to portray themselves as corporate reformers and their opponents as sleazy lobbyists and speculators. For instance, when Jim Talent—the Republican Senate candidate in Missouri—was in Congress, he sponsored legislation to divert 16 percent of Social Security taxes to retirement accounts managed by private managers. Now Talent says he "has not voted and will not vote to fully or partially privatize Social Security." In South Florida, Republican E. Clay Shaw Jr. voted this year for the GOP prescription-drug plan that would have bypassed Medicare in favor of private insurance companies. Now he boasts that he voted for "a comprehensive prescription-drug benefit under Medicare." In Colorado, Republican Senate candidate Wayne Allard—who tried to block accounting reform in 2000 and was initially indifferent to corporate reform—runs ads criticizing corporate executives for "engaging in fraud" and announcing "Wayne Allard said, 'Enough.'" But judging from the polls—which show the Democrats' edge on Social Security, prescription drugs, and corporate reform to be as large as ever—this GOP political cross-dressing isn't working.

In the past, Republicans have overcome their disadvantage on economic issues by using social wedge issues, such as guns and abortion. But in this election Republicans are likely to be more hurt than helped by these subjects. Chastened by their failure to win the votes of rural and Southern voters in 2000, Democrats have nominated candidates in those areas who oppose gun control and who are, in some cases, anti-abortion. Democrat Jim Humphreys, running against Shelley Moore Capito in West Virginia, opposes gun control. South Carolina Senate candidate Alex Sanders is a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA). Rural Pennsylvania Representative Tim Holden is anti-abortion and anti-gun control. By contrast, the GOP, outside the urban Northeast, is still dominated by conservative interest groups that demand adherence to their positions—even if that makes them vulnerable to moderate Democrats. Because of this, Republican candidates closely identified with the religious right or the NRA could lose to moderate Democrats in California, Kansas, Michigan, Illinois, Tennessee, Colorado, Arizona, Maryland, and New Jersey. In Kansas, Republicans chose Treasurer Tim Shallenburger in a gubernatorial primary against more moderate opponents. Shallenburger opposes abortion, supports citizens carrying concealed weapons, and opposes tax increases for any purpose—even to make up cuts in education funding. Although Kansas is a rock-ribbed Republican state, Shallenburger is well behind moderate Democrat Kathleen Sebelius in the polls.

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THE GOVERNORS' RACES offer the best window into how voters' pessimism and their preference for Democratic social and economic policies could affect the November election. In these races the presumptive war with Iraq counts little, if at all. What counts is voters' perception of what the candidates will do about issues such as education and the economy. Republicans currently control 27 governors' mansions, Democrats 21, and Independents two. Thirty-six of those seats are being contested this year. If the current favorites win, Democrats will have gained eight seats—seven at the expense of Republicans—leading to a split of 29 Democrats, 20 Republicans, and one Independent. The last time such a dramatic shift occurred was in 1994—when Republicans won a net gain of eleven seats. In that year, of course, Republicans also captured the Senate and the House.

The Democrats' likely gubernatorial successes suggest important inroads in what were once Republican or closely contested regions. In the 1990s, the industrial Midwest and the mid-Atlantic region were major battlegrounds between the parties. Up until 1998, Republicans controlled governors' mansions in Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Iowa, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. But with this fall's election, Democrats will probably gain control of all these states except Ohio. (Even in Ohio, where Democrats have suffered from an incompetent party organization, a token Democratic gubernatorial candidate is running within ten points of incumbent Republican Robert Taft.) Democrats are also doing well in Sun Belt swing states, such as Arizona, which have been slowly turning their way over the last decade.

The Senate contests are less certain because it is hard to judge how deeply they have been affected by the debate over Iraq. Even here, however, polls look good for the Democrats. According to the most recent opinion polls, Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone, one of the Democrats' most vulnerable incumbents, has pulled nine points ahead of challenger Norm Coleman, and Democratic candidates are either tied with or ahead of Republican incumbents in Arkansas, Colorado, and New Hampshire. In Georgia, Louisiana, Montana, and New Jersey, Democratic seats once deemed at risk now appear secure. If the election had been held October 11, the day the Senate voted on Iraq, Democrats would have come out with a 51 to 48 advantage—52 counting Independent Vermont Senator Jim Jeffords. (And that's assuming vulnerable Democratic incumbents lose in Missouri and South Dakota.) In the coming weeks, as war with Iraq recedes as an issue, some of these races should turn further toward the Democrats.

House seats are even more difficult to predict because there are so few nonpartisan polls by which to evaluate candidates' chances. But there are indicators that the Democrats are running even or slightly ahead. In *Newsweek*'s October 10 poll of generic congressional choices, Democrats led by 46 percent to 43 percent among likely voters. Republican pollster Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates has surveyed voters in the 40 most competitive House districts, as defined by *The Cook Political Report*. In mid-September, Republicans led by 43 percent to 38 percent; at the end of September, Republicans and Democrats were tied at 41 percent. Because twice as many of these contested seats are currently held by Republicans, if the Democrats win a little more than half of them, they will pick up several additional seats—perhaps enough to retake the House.

For the GOP to win back the Senate and retain the House, voters would have to put national security above economic and social concerns. To this end, Republican Senate candidates in Georgia, Minnesota, and South Dakota have run ads insinuating that their Democratic opponents are soft on Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden. But these attacks don't seem to have made a difference in any of these races—including Minnesota, where Wellstone voted against the administration's Iraq resolution. According to the Zogby poll, Wellstone actually went from a six-point deficit to a nine-point advantage during the time Coleman was attacking his credibility on foreign policy. Wellstone reversed Coleman's advantage among Twin Cities voters, Independent voters, and women—suggesting, perhaps, a backlash against Coleman's attacks or even support for Wellstone's dissent on the war in Iraq.

More to the point, past precedent suggests that by November 5, foreign policy will no longer overshadow domestic concerns. Midterm elections in 1982 (when U.S.-Soviet tensions were at their height) and in 1990 (when Iraq was occupying Kuwait) were both dominated by domestic issues, and the party in power lost ground because of voters' worries about the economy. Republicans like to point to the 1962 midterm elections, conducted only one week after John F. Kennedy successfully faced down the Soviet Union in the Cuban missile crisis. In those elections the Democrats lost only four House seats, while picking up three Senate seats. But the circumstances then were quite different. When voters went to the polls in 1962, the air was still thick with tension from the crisis, and Kennedy and the Democrats benefited from the rush in popularity that comes in the immediate aftermath of a dramatic military success. More important, Kennedy and the Democrats didn't have to worry about the economy: During Kennedy's first 22 months the United States had climbed out of a recession, with unemployment falling from 7.1 percent in May 1961 to 5.4 percent in October 1962. While comparable polling measures are not available, the Americans who voted that November probably felt optimistic about where the economy and the country were going. This year pessimism abounds.

The White House itself recognizes that Republicans cannot rely exclusively on war with Iraq as we approach November 5. In these last three weeks, Bush will reportedly shift the campaign debate from foreign policy to the economy. Perhaps that will boost Republican chances. But it is equally possible that it will merely speed the transition from a political terrain where the Republicans have an advantage to one where the Democrats do. If that happens, Republicans will be in trouble. One of the parties might get swept this November, but it is not likely to be the Democrats. ■

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How Saddam manipulates the U.S. media.

Air War

By Franklin Foer

If the bombs begin falling on Baghdad, a broad swath of the TV-viewing world will quickly become intimate with Jane Arraf, CNN's Iraq correspondent for the past four years. Arraf files her reports from the third-floor landing of a blocky white building a few hundred meters from the Tigris River, with the ancient city's minaret-filled panorama behind her. CNN shares the building with the BBC, Associated Press, Reuters, and the handful of other news organizations that have a permanent presence in Baghdad. But there's an uncomfortable fact about this building to which these tenants don't often call attention: It's the Iraqi Ministry of Information.

About six floors above Arraf's set, not far from her office, sits the ministry's monitoring section, where rows of apparatchiks in headphones listen to recordings of Western broadcasts from Iraq. One TV reporter who glimpsed the operation four years ago describes the listeners transcribing the tapes by hand, with passages critical of the regime written in red. The ministry stores the transcripts in files, which are pulled out and analyzed when journalists apply for visas. Elsewhere in the building, a group of intelligence officials from the Directorate of Anti-Espionage ("M5") and the Directorate of Surveillance ("M10") congregate to devise daily strategies for tracking and obstructing foreign journalists. An ex-Iraqi intelligence official I contacted through the opposition Iraqi National Congress wrote a memo to me describing their tactics: sending women to seduce male reporters in their hotel rooms, planting false information with reporters, destroying reporters' equipment. The former Iraqi intelligence agent wrote, "Every journalist from abroad is considered a spy with a journalist cover. He should be followed and indicated and controlled one way or another."

Like their Soviet-bloc predecessors, the Iraqis have become masters of the Orwellian pantomime—the state-orchestrated anti-American rally, the state-led tours of alleged chemical weapons sites that turn out to be baby milk factories—that promotes their distorted reality. And the Iraqi regime has found an audience for these displays in an unlikely place: the U.S. media. It's not because American reporters have an ideological sympathy for Saddam Hussein; broadcasting his propaganda is simply the only way they can continue to work in Iraq. "There's a quid pro quo for being there," says Peter Arnett, who worked the Iraq beat for CNN for a decade. "You go in and they control what you do. ... So you have no option other than to report the opinion of the government of Iraq." In other words, the Western media's presence in the Ministry of Information describes more than just a physical reality.

In October 1995, ABC News' Sheila MacVicar filed a story from Baghdad on Iraq's presidential referendum. Iraqis generally consider it too risky to speak honestly to a reporter from American television, but MacVicar had come across a rare moment of dissent. As Iraqis lined up to cast their votes, they flashed MacVicar their ration cards, which guarantee them a supply of government-issued food. The point was clear: In exchange for their votes, officials stamped the cards. When MacVicar filed her story, she reported this small current of rebellion and called the forthcoming referendum results—99.96 percent for Saddam—a fiction.

No correspondent had spent more time in Iraq than MacVicar. Since her first trip to Baghdad in 1986, she had regularly shuttled between Baghdad and ABC's London bureau. After her referendum report, however, that shuttling abruptly ended. She stopped receiving responses to her visa requests. More than 18 months passed while she cooled her heels in the InterContinental Hotel in Amman, Jordan, trying to report on Iraq from across the border. As correspondents from other networks received visas, she realized the Iraqis had targeted her for retribution. Desperate to get MacVicar back to Baghdad, ABC sent a fixer, a Jordanian troubleshooter with Iraqi government ties, to work the back channels. After several trips to Baghdad, the fixer reported that MacVicar had been placed on a blacklist, but an arrangement could be made: MacVicar could return if she sent a letter apologizing for "her rude treatment of His Excellency." MacVicar hedged. She wrote that she "apologized if there was offense found." A few months later she was allowed to return to Iraq.

MacVicar is not alone. Visas are the Ministry of Information's primary tools for controlling foreign journalists. Even correspondents for CNN and the BBC, which maintain permanent offices in Baghdad, must continually apply for visas, which typically last only two weeks. And without visas for their own correspondents, the networks have to rely on local Iraqis to keep their offices running—locals who are even more subject to government reprisals than are visiting Americans.

The process of obtaining an Iraqi visa is labyrinthine. First you send the Iraqi consulate in Washington, D.C., a copy of your curriculum vitae and passport. If the Iraqis decide that you are eligible to apply, you fill out a form provided by the consulate that asks about your religion and

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relationship to the American government. During moments of crisis, such as the current one, four separate committees in Baghdad review the application. And you can't find out their decision for certain by mail or by phone. The only way to get a definitive answer is to travel to the Iraqi Embassy in Amman, or to have your organization's Amman fixer make inquiries for you. NPR's Eric Weiner recounts waiting for weeks at a time at the Amman InterContinental Hotel. Every morning at 10 a.m., he'd walk to what journalists call the " 'window of shame'—a sliding metal shutter in front of the [Iraqi] embassy. Invariably, the guy inside would mutter something like, 'No visa today. Come back tomorrow,' and slam the shutter closed." In other words, you can very easily travel halfway around the world only to learn that you won't be going the last 200 miles to Iraq.

Many of the world's authoritarian regimes—North Korea, Myanmar, Iran—use similar methods to control foreign journalists. But in those less newsworthy countries, American media organizations don't play along nearly as much. In Iraq, by contrast, high-ranking network functionaries endlessly court the Ministry of Information so they will be well-positioned when they need to get their reporters in. (Media executives not on news-gathering missions get visas much more easily.) This month—in preparation for the impending war—Fox News Senior Vice President John Moody made the pilgrimage. And nobody has schmoozed the ministry harder than the head of CNN's News Group, Eason Jordan, who has traveled to Baghdad twelve times since the Gulf war. In part these trips consist of network execs setting up meetings with Iraqi officials to try to persuade them that the networks are not sending CIA stooges. And in part they consist of network execs promising the Iraqi regime that they will cover its propaganda. "[The Iraqis] make it clear that you must attend if you hope to get future visas," one cameraman told me. That may explain why earlier this spring Tom Brokaw drove eleven hours through the desert to broadcast live from Baghdad on the eve of Saddam's sixty-fifth birthday—and why dozens of top correspondents covered this week's presidential referendum, even though every journalist considers the event a sham.

The networks make these concessions because the alternative is no access. Jordan says the Iraqis have shut down CNN's Baghdad bureau on at least five occasions since the Gulf war, at times when they deemed CNN reports to be too critical. Currently, three of the network's correspondents—Wolf Blitzer, Richard Roth, and Christiane Amanpour—are banned from obtaining visas. Recently retired *New York Times* reporter Barbara Crossette, who traveled to Baghdad twice in the late '90s, wasn't allowed back after she wrote articles in 1998 belying Iraqi stories about the horrors of U.N. sanctions. And as ABC's "Primetime Thursday" prepared an interview with Saddam's former mistress, Parisoula Lampsos, which ran last month, an Iraqi official told the network's fixer in Amman that ABC would never again receive visas. (ABC has since been granted permission to enter.) In fact, according to an ABC source, the official intimated that they could pay an even greater price. "Was ABC not concerned with the safety of their people?" he asked.

If you are lucky enough to gain a visa to report in Iraq, you also receive a minder, an English-speaking government shadow who is required by the regime and will cost you at least $100 per day. In theory, the minder is the journalist's ally—a logistician, translator, and source of basic information about Iraqi life. In practice, as *Newsweek*'s Joshua Hammer puts it, "They range from real bastards to boring parrots of the regime." The minder is a well-practiced obstructionist, limiting journalists' travels to a government-approved itinerary. "From the moment you arrive," says Crossette, "freedom of movement is an irrelevant concept."

CRAIG LAROTONDA, REVELATION STUDIOS

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It's the minder who enforces the Ministry of Information's will. When a TV crew wants to shoot footage, even of one of the many Saddam murals and statues, the reporters must get a letter of permission from the information ministry. "You better have a piece of paper or they won't let you shoot. They'll think that you're a fucking spy. They're paranoid," says Arnett. The letters, which the minders demand, often impose strict restrictions on the crew, occasionally dictating camera angles. Sometimes the minders even impede journalists' work just for the heck of it. One producer described to me the agony of filming a B-roll shot of an arch composed of two oversized swords at a parade ground. Her minder furiously objected. After extensive haggling, the minder forbade her crew from taking this meaningless footage.

According to the ex-Iraqi intelligence officer, even when the minder is out of sight, officials are watching all the time. His six-page memo refers constantly to the journalist as *hadef* ("target"). He writes, "Put the target under secretive surveillance. This will be used to gather information against him or find him doing something he's not supposed to. Prepare plans to make him fail, or seduce him to do things. ... One effective way is though sexual relations. ... When they feel the target is closing in on sensitive material, create technical problems that will obstruct his path. ... For example, create a car accident. This usually will happen with a taxi driven by intelligence personnel. ... Produce false information, and see what level of ability he has to distinguish between good and bad information."

The American correspondents I spoke with corroborated that they were under constant surveillance. One producer describes making a satellite telephone call from a corner of the Al Rasheed Hotel's garden, far from her minder and any other apparent eavesdroppers. As she left the garden a man approached and told her, "Never do that again." Hammer spoke in French with a friend by satellite phone in his hotel room; the next morning his minder greeted him, "*Vous parlez français, aussi*?" When one correspondent unplugged a television, a repairman knocked on his door a few minutes later asking to fix the set. "They're obviously watching me in bed," he said. "And I'm pretty sure that they're watching me in the bathroom. I've never wanted to leave a place so badly."

Even when reporters faithfully follow the regime's instructions, the Ministry of Information still torments them. Arnett describes constant harangues from ministry officials, even about colleagues over whom he had no control. They'd complain, "What the hell is Larry King saying? Can't you shut him up?" Other reporters describe fierce tongue-lashings for having crossed prosaic red lines. The Iraqis won't abide references to the "regime" (they prefer "government") or to "Saddam" (they prefer "President Saddam Hussein").

Sometimes the officials go beyond angry lectures. According to a network source, on about four separate occasions in 1996 the Iraqis roused MacVicar from her hotel room at 2 a.m. and drove her to the Ministry of Information, where officials screamed that she was working for the CIA. The French documentary filmmaker Joel Soler told me how his minder took him to a hospital, ostensibly to examine the effects of sanctions, but then called in a nurse with a long needle. "He said, 'Now we'll do a series of blood tests.'" Soler jumped on the table screaming: "I said, 'I'm calling my ambassador.' If I'd been American, forget about it." There's the horror story of *The London Observer*'s Farzad Bazoft, an Iranian-born British journalist. A few months before the Gulf war, the Iraqis tried Bazoft behind closed doors on charges of espionage. They then hung him. As he turned over Bazoft's remains to the British Embassy in Baghdad, Information Minister Latif Nassif Jassim told journalists, "Mrs. Thatcher wanted him alive. We gave her the body."

To stay on the right side of the regime, many reporters on the Baghdad beat take the path of least resistance: They mimic the Baath Party line. Lacking other stories, they go along with government-arranged tours—most popularly to the leukemia ward at Saddam Central Children's Hospital, where doctors recount the horrors of sanctions, and to the Martyr's Monument, a Baghdad memorial to 400 women and children accidentally killed by an American missile during the Gulf war. ("They revel in pointing out the pieces of charred flesh on the wall," says Howard Witt of the *Chicago Tribune*.) The Iraqis also load up buses of foreign journalists for tours of alleged weapons sites or street protests. But the demonstrations aren't terribly convincing. One journalist described to me an anti-American demonstration held last April in Baghdad to celebrate Saddam's sixty-fifth birthday. She saw the same high school students pass by several times, simulating an endless stream of angry protesters. When her colleagues turned their cameras on, officials with bullhorns instructed the crowd to increase the volume of their chants. "Everyone knows they're a sham," says the journalist. "But CNN in Atlanta is telling Nic Robertson that he has to file a story. He doesn't have anything else to work with. So he shows the demonstration."

Nobody better exemplifies this go-along-to-get-along reporting strategy than the dean of Western reporters in Baghdad, Arraf. In a segment last month, answering viewer phone calls, Arraf rebutted the charge that Saddam's vanity construction projects have diverted money that could have been used to feed his starving people. Sanctions, she said, have "tied his hands in some respects." Later in the same segment, repeating Saddam's constant refrain, she told viewers, "If there's been anything that's been essentially agreed over the last decade, it's been that the sanctions that are in place, held in place by the U.N. and U.S., haven't been working." (That's a pretty substantial overstatement given that both the United States and the United Nations officially believe sanctions serve a necessary purpose: to keep Saddam from more rapidly rearming.) Arraf even endorsed Saddam's justification for denying U.N. weapons inspectors entry to presidential palaces: "[T]he palaces are ... a symbol here, a symbol [of] sovereignty and a symbol [of] President Saddam Hussein, and they're not too fond of the idea of inspectors just barging in." In that same report Arraf never notes that the

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United States suspects those same presidential-palace complexes of doubling as weapons factories.

There's nothing unusual about reporters ingratiating themselves to a source. But Arraf's beat sweeteners are a little hard to swallow. Last year she ran a story on the tenth anniversary of the Gulf war that included this nearly congratulatory section on Saddam: "He, too, endures. More than a symbol, a powerful force who has survived three major U.S.-led attacks since the Gulf war, bombing, and plots to depose him. At 63, the president mocks rumors he is ill. Not just standing tall but building up. As soon as the dust settled from the Gulf war, and the bodies were buried, Iraq began rebuilding." In her report reviewing Saddam's past ten years, Arraf included no mention of his butchery that has been documented in Human Rights Watch reports and in dozens of books. From her telling, you'd think he's the Robert Moses of Mesopotamia.

In fact, even Arraf herself seems to know that what she is saying is probably bunk. Last March she published a piece in London's *Daily Telegraph* (which the Iraqi Ministry of Information apparently missed), in which she outlined the near impossibility of reporting honestly on Saddam's regime. She wrote, "People in the streets are not allowed to talk to television journalists; or rather, the journalists are not allowed to talk to them. 'Why do you want to ask them political questions? They are not qualified to answer,' an official said. ... More than most countries, there is a wide gap in Iraq between what people profess in public for their own safety and what they say in private." Nonetheless, Arraf still frequently includes in her CNN reports, without qualification or caveat, footage of Iraqi people condemning the United States and lauding their leader.

Many of Arraf's colleagues commit the same egregious errors, treating regime-organized demonstrations as if they were genuine expressions of public opinion. NBC's man in Iraq, Ron Allen, filed a report from Saddam's birthday bash last April that noted, "[T]he huge crowds in the streets suggest Saddam still has firm control of his country. Iraqi officials defiantly insist the celebration sends a clear message, especially to the U.S., that the people will stand behind their leader." Introducing a tour of an Iraqi nuclear facility north of Baghdad last month, he said, "The propaganda war really heated up here in Iraq," but then never hinted at the many indications—the fact, for instance, that Iraq isn't allowing inspectors to visit the site—that the tour was a sham. The point, he told viewers, was "to show that, in fact, this site is virtually harmless. ... 'It's a peaceful place,' [the Iraqis] said, 'a place for peaceful research.'" He even refers at length to former weapons-inspector-turned-Saddam-apologist Scott Ritter, without an allusion to Ritter's well-documented change of heart about the Iraqi threat. Unlike Allen and Arraf, even the three Democratic congressmen—Jim McDermott, Mike Thompson, and David Bonior—who recently returned from a peace mission to Baghdad, grasped that a cursory inspection by nonexperts could serve no purpose except to further Saddam's propaganda.

In part, reporters spin these bogus tours into stories because the risks of airing meaningful material are just too high. A TV journalist told me about the time he interviewed a respected Baghdad politico on camera. The journalist was shocked by his subject's candid criticisms of the government. But as the reporter left the interview, his minder told him, "I can't tell you what to do. But if he says that on camera, he'll be in severe trouble—and so will I." Worried about putting lives at risk, the journalists never aired his footage. Even innocuous conversations can result in reprisals. Witt, who traveled to Iraq last spring, says, "Most journalists don't want to put anyone at risk. The potential price is too horrible. Either you get your tongue cut out and then you're executed, or you're just executed. You have your choice."

THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES to mindlessly reciting Baghdad's spin. Instead of desperately trying to keep their Baghdad offices open, the networks could scour Kurdistan and Jordan, where there are many recently arrived Iraqis who can talk freely. "Amman is the place to find out what's really going on in Iraq," says ex-CIA officer Robert Baer, who spent the mid-'90s working in and around Iraq. (To CNN's credit, it has sent reporter Brent Sadler to Kurdistan despite Baghdad's furious objections.) Or they could they use their access to depict the harsh realities of life under Saddam—even if it means never returning to Iraq. It's a method used by Soler in his documentary *Uncle Saddam*, to be aired on Cinemax next month. After spending a month ingratiating himself with Saddam's entourage, Soler convinced the Iraqis to grant him camera time with His Excellency's inner circle. His film shows Saddam to be a lunatic, devoid of morality or humanity. It captures images of Saddam's unique style of fishing—hurling grenades into a pond and then sending aides to retrieve the kill. It documents Saddam's megalomania: Iraq's biggest paper features Saddam in a new pose on the cover each day. "I don't need a relationship with Iraq," he explains of his decision to bare all. "It was my one shot. Every day it was how can I push the limits."

To be sure, after screening his documentary for film festivals and Iraqi opposition groups in the U.S., Soler found red paint splattered on his Los Angeles home, his trash can set on fire, and a death threat in his mailbox. But with the film he smuggled out of Iraq via courier, Soler gives more psychological insight into Saddam than ten years of American TV reportage.

When I asked CNN's Jordan to explain why his network is so devoted to maintaining a perpetual Baghdad presence, he listed two reasons: "First, because it's newsworthy; second, because there's an expectation that if anybody is in Iraq, it will be CNN." His answer reveals the fundamental attitude of most Western media: Access to Baghdad is an end in itself, regardless of the intellectual or moral caliber of the journalism such access produces. An old journalistic aphorism holds "access is a curse." The Iraqi experience proves it can be much worse than that. ■

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Two of a Certain Kind

"HISTORY," SAYS Stephen Dedalus, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." This line, possibly the most famous in *Ulysses*, is made to seem even more poignant by two new films that re-create history. These films suggest that the nightmare is all: the awakening does not exist.

The Grey Zone (Lions Gate) is set in Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944. That sentence itself almost closes the subject. The prospective viewer may recoil, feeling that he has had sufficient vicarious camp experience by now. The bizarre fact is that, to recommend the film, the response has to be aesthetic. Artistic achievement in a portrayal of Auschwitz? Yes: at last, at last, artistic quality is what distinguishes this film.

The American writer-director Tim Blake Nelson began otherwise. In the early 1990s he read the memoirs of Miklós Nyiszli, a Hungarian Jewish doctor who was sent to Auschwitz. Nyiszli was spared the ovens so that he could assist Dr. Joseph Mengele, the German medical barbarian who was conducting experiments on inmates. Nelson became interested in the rationales that one could devise to save one's own life, and this interest led him to the *Sonderkommandos*, the squads of Jewish prisoners who could prolong their lives—for four months—by assisting in the gassing and the burning and the waste disposal. Diaries kept by some of these men were found buried in glass jars at Birkenau. With all this material, Nelson then wrote a play on the subject that was produced Off-Broadway. The film followed. (The title is presumably taken from Primo Levi's *The Drowned and the Saved*, in which it signifies the area, literal and otherwise, occupied by the *Sonderkommandos*—an "ill-defined sphere of ambiguity and compromise.")

Now for the aesthetics. Nelson did not depend on the facts in themselves, stark though they are, to carry his work. His screenplay is tight and forceful, free of heroics and rhetoric. The production design by Maria Djurkovic is chillingly credible. The cinematography by Russell Lee Fine, which has the effect of black-and-white though it is not thus limited, is stamped with verity. The cast disdains the lurid, even with Harvey Keitel as the German officer in charge of this particular group of *Sonderkommandos*. Nyiszli is played by Allan Corduner, last seen in the United States (of all ludicrous coincidences) as Sir Arthur Sullivan in *Topsy-Turvy*. Corduner gives the man a hard-bitten, almost abstract reality. Mira Sorvino, thoroughly subscribed, plays a prisoner who is subjected to cunning moral torture.

That torture is related to an uprising contrived by the *Sonderkommandos* in October of 1944. Near Auschwitz-Birkenau was a munitions factory staffed with female prisoners. Some of these women managed to smuggle gunpowder into the camp, and the result was the only destruction of a German crematorium during the war. Inevitably many inmates were executed in consequence, but the point of Nelson's film is that at least some of those prisoners, who had prolonged their lives by service to the Germans, used the salvaged time for an act of defiance.

Most of *The Grey Zone* was shot in Bulgaria, which gave the director European faces to work with. That term is impossible to define, but it is also impossible to avoid. Nelson worked with large groups of people, sometimes several groups in one shot, and—again an uncomfortable but unavoidable term—the result is a powerful choreography. Nor has Nelson missed the sting of contradictions—the sprinkler watering the lawn outside a crematorium, the band of prisoner musicians playing Strauss's "Roses from the South" as long files of men and women descend the steps to the gas chambers.

So we are left with a mordancy. *The Grey Zone* cannot add much to any adult's knowledge of the camps, but some talented people have treated the subject with exceptional art.

The nightmare of history continues in another film, with comparable grimness, lesser only in the numbers involved. **Bloody Sunday** (Paramount Classics) recounts the events in Derry, Northern Ireland on January 30, 1972. The picture was made to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the massacre. It was the creation of the English television writer-director Paul Greengrass, who wrote the screenplay—which largely meant arranging sequences of actual events and views—with Don Mullan, who had written a book on the subject. Though again the events are well known, the film's motive was to memorialize the debacle and to underscore the long, ongoing history of the Irish Troubles, perhaps with a hope to conclude them. (If the title sounds vaguely familiar, Greengrass explains why. In the course of the picture we glimpse a theater marquee announcing the Schlesinger film *Sunday Bloody Sunday*—nothing to do with this subject.)

On that January 30, a large crowd marched in Derry to protest oppressive British actions, a march that had been banned by the British. The army officers made plans for containment of the march: troops were stationed along the route. The leader of the march, Ivan Cooper, was a Protestant; most of the marchers apparently were Catholic. Cooper called for non-violent protest in the spirit of Gandhi and Martin Luther King. The British troops were supplied with rubber bullets. In the course of the march, some younger marchers, members of the IRA, may have opened fire. (We don't see this act: we hear the shots.) The British soldiers apparently were also furnished with live ammunition. At the end of the day, thirteen of the Irish marchers were dead, one of them shot at close range as he lay wounded. A fourteenth died later. Subsequently the officers in charge of the troops on that day were decorated by the queen.

James Nesbitt, prominent in Britain, plays Cooper warmly and well. Tim Pigott-Smith is the British general that we would expect him to be. All of the sizable cast are completely authentic. As in *The Grey Zone*, the director's work is overwhelming. Once again, multitudes of people and of soldiers are used with precision and balance, with swirls of feeling that are—is there any other way to say this?—beautiful.

Ivan Strasburg's cinematography, mostly with a hand-held camera, keeps close, inquisitive, tacitly shocked. Clare Douglas's editing virtually makes a roaring tumult through visual means. Greengrass often cuts to a moment of black,

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either after a sequence or in the middle of a sequence. The effect is quite different from the blinks of black in the recent Godard film. That was merely fidelity to a director's mode. Here Greengrass is adding plaque after plaque of stupidities and hate.

Should films like *The Grey Zone* and *Bloody Sunday* still be made? To doubt it is to imply a cinematic statute of limitations: it suggests that after a certain number of films have been done on a black episode in history, the subject should be arbitrarily closed. But who has or would want that authority? Anyway, more biting than the bleakness of such films as these is the persistence of Stephen Dedalus's desperation.

The almost agonizing aspect of these films is that, after they fulfill their sheerly informational function, the only criterion left, as noted above, is aesthetic. How disquietingly odd to discuss such films as works of art. Poems and paintings on these subjects, of which there are plenty—especially of the Holocaust—do not provoke quite the same unease, possibly because they are not displayed in places of entertainment. Yet it is precisely the appearance of such films in theaters that makes aesthetic judgment inevitable. Somewhere far off, down some long echoing corridor of temporal perspective, this aesthetic judgment possibly becomes just. ■

The Roughs and Beards

By David Bromwich

Democracy, Culture, and the Voice of Poetry by Robert Pinsky

(Princeton University Press, 96 pp., $14.95)

I.

This book is a pair of lectures that together form a meditation on poetry and public life by our only two-term poet laureate. Robert Pinsky obviously liked the job, and he did good things with it—reading poems aloud on public television, for example—with occasional forays into more common recreations, such as his preface to a package of stickum words and letters for composing poems on your refrigerator. Pinsky chose the topic for the lectures; but it is doubtful how much choice an American poet or critic has once he decides to address the relationship between poetry and democratic culture. He then becomes a minister with portfolio, charged with thinking again about certain things that Walt Whitman said in his preface to *Leaves of Grass* in 1855.

"America," Whitman declared, "does not repel the past." It does immensely absorb the phenomena of the present. America ushers out peacefully the old world of custom and tradition, and "perceives that the corpse is slowly borne from the eating and sleeping rooms of the house." Above all, America provides a setting for imaginative invention, filled with "the roughs and beards and space and ruggedness and nonchalance that the soul loves." The American poet ought to embrace discovery of every kind—"in the beauty of poems are the tuft and final applause of science"—but the highest discovery is the individual self of a man or woman. "An individual is as superb as a nation when he has the qualities which make a superb nation," and "the proof of a poet is that his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorbed it." Democracy, as Whitman expounds it, is not a matter of the numbers in the audience. It is an experience of a particular relation between oneself and the world.

Pinsky is deliberately less grand. He would like to be at once cheerful and prudent in what he claims for poetry and what he asks from democracy. He begins by whittling down the world to "society" and then translating society into "culture." In modern academic and bureaucratic usage, he notes, culture "has become a kind of ulterior cause of causes." At first, it looks as if Pinsky means to reject this quasi-religious idea of culture; and there are good reasons for rejecting it. Culture as an ulterior cause of causes is an intellectual soft sell: impossible to say no to, because it never adds up to a clear assertion. It confuses tough-minded concession to the facts (culture includes us and influences us) with a wishful projection of piety (we ought to accept our culture because it made us what we are). While reading this book, I never felt sure of whether Pinsky saw through the sell, or of quite what he wanted to mean by culture. He says that high culture will not be his province, since in America it is an irrelevance or worse, "an often desperate, Anglophile urbanity." What, then, of the idea of "self-culture"—the purposeful enterprise of aesthetic education that we read about in the pages of Schiller, Humboldt, Mill, and to some extent Whitman? This sense of the word Pinsky also leaves unexplored. When he speaks of culture, he ends up mostly referring to the mass culture of America.

His own attitude toward that culture is equivocal, but the drift of the remarks is from criticism to affirmation. Early in the book, we are told that "the market-generated mass culture ... resembles the irresistible domination of the colonizers who sweep away and drown out and plow under the ancient range of cultural variety." A few pages later, it has become "a dazzling mass culture"—the dazzle of the strip mall and the video arcade. Yet the note of praise is conspicuous, as the reservation is not; and by the end of the first lecture we have "the mass culture of our democracy ... a mighty achievement." The second lecture opens with an effort of impartial description: "a tremendously powerful, elaborate, and often brilliant mass culture." That would seem judicious enough, but Pinsky cannot let it lie, and in his peroration he gives a curious pledge of good faith: "I speak as an enthusiast of modern life: I enjoy the possibilities of jet travel, the DVD, and the VCR, am devoted to my computer and my cell phone, appreciate the marvels of contemporary plumbing, medicine, dentistry." What is such a presentation for? Who demanded that he prove himself a well-adjusted person?

These are incidental details. I cite them because they exert a pull of their own and slightly shift the center of the argument. Pinsky believes that something about democracy yearns for poetry, and that something about poetry tends toward democracy—or toward a democratic

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consciousness of oneself and other people in all their variety. Some interesting notions are brought in here, but they could have used a little more cooking. Poetry has its origin, Pinsky guesses, in a kind of dreaming aloud, a muttering of articulate but obscure sounds and iterations, an oblique meditation on elements of life that may have been inscrutable or resistant to analysis until extruded in the form of "breath" or "voice." This view of the motive for poetry, which comes from Freud on repression and displacement, is chiefly concerned to name an instinct of imitation. Shelley made a simpler surmise about the source of the instinct. He speculated, in "A Defense of Poetry," that artistic imitation has an identical motive with the animal reflex that prolongs excitement through mimicry. A singer drawing out the final note of a torch song, a wrestler shouting after his opponent has gone to the mat, a dog howling when a passing ambulance becomes a distant whine: all, in Shelley's view, are acting from the same primitive instinct.

BUT PINSKY WORKS "the body" into his argument in a more intricate way. A poem is said to be "corporeal," a body of words that needs to be processed by a physical body, through the medium of the human voice. So the body of the poem and the body of the reader together effect a passage between that primitive muttering and its reception by an external listener. Meanwhile, we can be sure in advance that poetry will turn out friendly to society, because Pinsky elects to describe the listener as a "social presence." This idea may initially mystify, and it had better be given in his words: "The vocality of poetry, involving the mind's energy as it moves toward speech, and toward incantation, also involves the creation of something like—indeed, precisely like—a social presence." The superfluous adjective "social" gives a rhetorical push to the idea that poetry and democracy go together.

To demonstrate how a poem may be a bodily presence for its reader, Pinsky quotes, from Robert Frost's "Home Burial," a commanding stretch of dialogue and narrative that draws us hypnotically in. Frost is an American poet, and his characters are ordinary people talking about the death of a child, and we may conclude that the immediacy of accent and gesture in the poem was only possible at an intimate crossing of poetry with the culture of democracy. The verse of "Home Burial" is said to "become more than a vehicle; it is a physical presence; as corporeal as the infant's corpse at the center of the poem's marital argument." It is a tempting conceit, but I do not believe it. Here are some of the quoted lines, about the wife's remembered horror at the sight of her husband digging the grave in his usual matter-of-fact manner:

> I saw you from that very window there,
> Making the gravel leap and leap in air,
> Leap up, like that, like that, and land so lightly
> And roll back down the mound beside the hole.
> I thought, Who is that man? I didn't know you.

Suppose we test the "corporeality" of these lines against some lines from "Medlars and Sorb-Apples"—the work of a very different poet, D. H. Lawrence, who was not an American and not a believer in democracy:

> A kiss, and a spasm of farewell, a moment's orgasm of rupture,
> Then along the damp road alone, till the next turning.
> And there, a new partner, a new parting, a new unfusing into twain,
> A new gasp of further isolation,
> A new intoxication of loneliness, among decaying, frost-cold leaves.

When I read both passages with attention to their sensuous texture, and search myself for evidence of the bodily or the corporeal, my impression is that Frost and Lawrence achieve effects that are comparably vivid, though Frost's lines are dramatic and rigid with antipathy, while Lawrence's suggest a melting surrender and regret. You will find that Frost enacts the presence of the physical in a uniquely democratic way only if that is what you set out to discover.

Yet the apt remarks that Pinsky makes on a range of poems—"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," William Carlos Williams's "These," Wallace Stevens's "The Man Whose Pharynx Was Bad"—may persuade some readers to agree that movements of the mind such as hesitation and self-mockery are best conceived in bodily terms. As he puts it seductively: "poetry penetrates to where the body recognizes the stirring of meaning." I think I partly understand. My saxophone teacher says that you have to feel it not just in your head but all the way in your lungs and your chest. Pinsky used to play the saxophone, and he is an admirer of Lester Young, who always memorized the lyrics of the songs that he played. But even allowing for the effects achievable by a good voice, or by a horn as close to the human voice as it is possible to come, I do not see how Pinsky's thesis about the corporeal poem and "social presence" can do justice to the abstracting power of imagination.

One may sometimes feel about an impression, When did *that* happen to me?—only to realize some time later that it happened in a line of a poem. The images of the greenhouse in Stevens's "The Plain Sense of Things," and of a patch of yellow on a wall in his "Long and Sluggish Lines," are so saturated with that kind of life that they seem to lift experience into imagination even as they steep imagination in experience. A similar quality can sometimes be found in a poem that starts from a sociable setting, as Elizabeth Bishop's "In the Waiting Room" does. Pinsky speaks of this poem in passing. Had he stayed with it longer, he would have needed to explain how it complicates his view of social presence. The people in the room with the poet are real, and her awareness of them is brought back at the end, but through much of the poem they are eclipsed by her terror of the thought of her singularity. That thought is the poet's motive for writing.

A BOOK THAT drives hard at a few points may have a value denied to a book that aims to see a subject from all sides. And one is never in any doubt about the tendency of Pinsky's argument. He urges appreciation not of what the poet does in writing a poem, but of what the reader does in reading it. The poet mainly counts as one more reader. So, too, Pinsky's idea of the place of poetry in democratic culture comes from an image of someone reading a poem to an audience. This emphasis leads naturally and almost inevitably to another. He has less to say about imagination than about memory. Indeed, memory is the hero of the book. It mediates, according to Pinsky, between the individual and culture, and helps us to avoid a distorting attachment to personal as well as gregarious concerns: "Memory resists uniformity because it registers fine gradations; memory resists the factional because it registers the impure, recombining, fluent nature of culture."

His definition places memory close to history on the one hand, and close to fantasy on the other. Memory is seen as better than history because it is personal, and as better than fantasy because it is true. Such a conception will not bear to be looked at very closely—for instance, the part about how memory "resists the factional." All the thoughts of a turtle are turtle, said Emerson, and experience will show that the memories of a faction are factional. In its

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optimistic treatment of memory, this book seems a casualty of the fugitive cant of the time. Many people, including historians who should know better, grow humble and choke up when they start to talk about memory. No other word today has quite the same odor of sanctity.

Anyway, Pinsky cares about memory for a reason. He wants to make us share his pedagogical preference for the good of memorization. There could hardly be a more valuable cause for a poet and a teacher to enlist in—not only for the sake of poetry, but also for the sake of prose; for the measure of things, as well as for the weight of words. Pinsky is so sure of his ground at this point that he almost promises an educational side-effect that poetry should not be called on to deliver: "I wonder if anyone who has memorized a lot of poetry, or heard a lot of it, can fail to write coherent sentences and paragraphs." Consult the autobiography of Marlon Brando. He memorized heaps of Shakespeare at various stages of his life, and he said the speeches extremely well when he played Mark Antony, but the book is an indifferent object. Pinsky mentions the memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant: did this professional soldier turn out to possess the skill of a professional writer because he had been made to memorize a lot of poetry? Thousands of schoolchildren have had to memorize poems. Few have grown up to write memorably.

Pinsky's second lecture pulls out some samples from the Favorite Poem Project. This is an archive of short video films in which readers tell a little about themselves, explain the importance that a particular poem has for them, and recite the poem on camera. The project has become well-known through many public and professional outlets, and Pinsky, its begetter and its leading advocate, has managed, through venues such as the Modern Language Association, to convey in a few deft strokes the richness of the archive. In this lecture, he speaks of a common pleasure to which the reciters in the films testify, "the freedom to judge the art of poetry itself as a consumer, intimidated by the art's difficulty but not by its social prestige or authority." That seems a fair description (omitting "consumer") of a general attitude toward poetry that emerges consistently from the archive.

Pinsky is right that both the shyness and the boldness are distinctively American. His most interesting exhibit is a film of a Boston Gas Company pipe-layer who recites the conclusion of *Song of Myself*. I have seen the film, and it is worth asking what makes it special—more unusual to see, I think, than it sounds in paraphrase. The reciter, John Doherty, says that Whitman's great poem "was definitely intimidating at first. It just looked like a lot of words that were out of order and out of place, that did not belong together." Doherty adds that such a poem takes "a lot of reading and re-reading to grasp." His saying of the final lines carries conviction—it is a good reading, as well as an impassioned one—so that lovers of the poem are apt to say to themselves: "He's another; he gets it." An opportunity exists here—glimpsed by the director, who shows Doherty wearing his hard hat at his place of work—to discern in the poem and its gifted reciter a predictable pair. Did not Whitman write of the pickaxe, the open road, "A Song for Occupations"? Yet the truth is that this reader of the poem is no more typical of a class of readers than the writer of it was typical of a class of writers.

The unified format of the Favorite Poem Project is misleading. Actually, the archive deals in two different kinds of record. Some of the films portray arrestingly, as this one does, the fortuitous meeting of a poem and a reader. Others are about the social presence of poetry in a more trivial and circumstantial sense. There is the teenage boy in a tough neighborhood who quotes Gwendolyn Brooks's poem about

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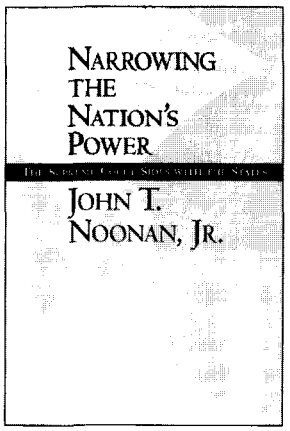

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acting cool and dying young. There is the librarian who recites, because she likes it, Frost's gruesome and tight-lipped "Out, Out"—a poem no voice could compass or atone for. About some of the specimens one feels that they show an exemplary contact, about others that they merely illustrate the use of poetry for a purpose. It is a decent way of spending money in the cause of public education, but neither the exceptional examples nor the routine ones tell us anything instructive about poetry and democracy. That topic, to the extent that it comes up, is not rooted in the speakers; it has been settled by the format. The specimens that address the "place" of poetry in America are only contingently about poetry. They might as well be about pets, paintings, or journeys to a favorite destination.

II.

A LECTURE SERIES on human values (these were the Tanner Lectures at Princeton University) may not be the place to make enemies. But the opposite strategy has its own hazards, and now and again the geniality of this book softens into a shrug of accommodation. Pinsky says that poets are often asked by reporters what they think of rap, and that his own response normally goes along these lines: "Don't know much about it, but my guess is that as with 'literary' poetry, most of it is ordinary, a little of it is very good and a little is contemptible." Well, nobody said he had to say anything about it. But in this area Coleridge's aphorism seems well-advised: poetry that makes us crave artificial feelings makes us callous to real ones. Not only the packaging of rap but also its extreme artificiality, and the callousness that it projects and conveys to boyish listeners of all ages, might be expected to arouse a defender of poetry to something beyond a good-natured plea of ignorance.

If poetry attempts to widen imagination, rap aims to narrow it. The ritualized strut and nod are supported by a trite poetic diction that offers rage, resentment, and dull self-pity as the only admissible emotions. A worse impediment to feeling, as Stanley Crouch has pointed out, is the racial stereotype on which all the other effects depend—a stereotype unaltered from the days of the minstrel shows, except that domination has taken the place of submission. All this matters if you agree that the value of our elective affinities is weakened by unmeaning displays of generosity. Doubtless Pinsky would want to say for the jazz of the 1940s and 1950s, of which he speaks affectionately, that more than "a little of it is very good," but Lester Young will never be heard by ears whose only previous music has been rap. The bad can drive out the good: a democrat should be able to acknowledge that fact about democracy. Why not say a sharp word, when you are in a position to say one, against the glamour of the bad and its legitimation?

The impulse to say yes, but not too noisily, and no, but not too fiercely, is the least Whitman-like feature of Pinsky's book. Whitman was a political radical who wanted poetry to carve out a space in the new world for a self that could endure and invent new forms of life. Pinsky is nonpolitical, and he writes from a familiar anxiety: that the written word is now on the point of being swallowed up by the other media. Hence the need to reassure us that the words on a page are as socially present as, say, the icons on a computer desktop or the people in the waiting room at a dentist's office. The danger in this line of defense is not that it leans on fairly relaxed analogies between poetry and other ways of knowing. It is rather that we may be led to forget the quality of pointless absorption that is a marked feature of anyone's first encounters with poetry.

THE STANDARD IDEA of the poet or the poetry-lover is of someone who likes to let the fancy roam. Poetry is supposed to be a place where you can arrange to have that happen, because it eases the rules by which convention normally governs the relations between words and things. The truth is much odder. A reader stares at a page and is enthralled to see the words combine without quite hardening into ideas. The inviting words may feel like an incantation, as in Eliot's "Marina": "What seas what shores what granite islands towards my timbers/And woodthrush calling through the fog/My daughter." Or the words may be dense and shaded by allegory, as in Leonie Adams's "The Runner with the Lots": "Though the great sails untorn/Of high September bear/Toward harbor earth and yield,/The amber-dwindled mood/Is come." The new reader of poetry who looks into words such as these cannot yet tell why they matter. The elementary wish is to see words jostling other words in a certain manner.

Pinsky's book concludes with a full-scale interpretation of Edwin Arlington Robinson's lyric "Eros Turannos"—a fable of desire marred by self-deception, which Pinsky reads as a tragedy of people stranded between two cultures. He finds more to say than other critics have about the "we" who form a chorus for the narrated action, and less to say about the life together, in a house by the ocean, of the couple who suffer catastrophe at the hands of Love the Tyrant. "We will tell" their story, says the chorus, "tapping on our brows," not as it happened but "as it should be"; yet there is no harm in doing so,

> for they
> That with a god have striven,
> Not hearing much of what we say,
> Take what the god has given;
> Though like waves breaking it may be,
> Or like a changed familiar tree,
> Or like a stairway to the sea
> Where down the blind are driven.

On these extraordinary final lines, Pinsky comments: "To the American thesis of a deadening absence of culture and its antithesis, a devouring omniculture, the poem responds with a synthesis that includes both a provincial tapping of our brows and the image of the blind driven down a stairway to the sea—all in a single breath of the poet's invention."

The explanation is certainly packed, and it keeps in play all the relevant concerns of the book: a past when the New World was thought devoid of culture; the social presence of mass culture today; the bewilderment of provincials who do not know the ways of art; and, of course, the body ("a single breath"). As a reading of the poem, it is absurdly stretched. Yet one can see how it happened. If poetry is going to be for everyone, everyone must be implicated in the plot of a given poem. In this light alone, it will make sense to characterize the "we" of Robinson's chorus as a central presence in the drama and not as a compact narrative device. Pinsky, I suspect, would think differently in a mood less compelled by a public theme, just as, in a less public setting, he would be wary of alluding to "the *demotic* genius" (emphasis added) "of characteristic makers like Herman Melville, Emily Dickinson, Preston Sturges, Duke Ellington, William Carlos Williams"—every one of them an original but not one a "demotic" artist in any sense of the word. This flattery of the lowly is founded on the false assumption that the people think themselves simple people. On the contrary: nothing is too good for the working man. Why do you suppose they called him Duke?

It is a waste of time and a drain on stamina to worry about the fact that poetry is a minority art. Soon you feel yourself accountable to the existing taste and the supposed wish for self-recognition by the majority. A few more steps on that path, and pretty soon you are telling people how devoted you are to your cell phone. Pinsky

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has some true things to say against Carl Sandburg's cult of poetry as popular uplift. He should have followed the force of the doubts that are the true ally of his admirations. Only a people-friendly theory needs to declare that poetry is for everyone. We may as well admit, instead, that poetry is enjoyed by a wayward confederacy of persons. It is a more anarchic thesis, for the purpose of filling classrooms and getting grant dollars. But it leaves better work to be done. It may come closer to what the pipe-layer John Doherty had in mind when he said about *Song of Myself*: "it looked like it would take a lot of work to get to know the words." ■

The Rescuer

By MICHAEL B. OREN

A Race Against Death: Peter Bergson, America, and the Holocaust by David S. Wyman and Rafael Medoff

(The New Press, 269 pp., $26.95)

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ago, while researching Holocaust history for the Joint Distribution Committee in New York, and as I was preparing to immigrate to Israel, I came across a clipping from *The New York Times* from 1936. Datelined Geneva, the article was titled "Suicide Shot Rings at League Session." It told of one Stefan Lux, a journalist of Czech nationality, who burst into the hall of the League of Nations, produced a revolver, shouted "*C'est le dernier coup!*," and shot himself. Four paragraphs of details followed—the incident interrupted a lengthy speech by the Spanish representative, the session dealt with Ethiopia, Belgium's premier was presiding—before I learned that Lux had been "born in Vienna of Jewish parents," and four paragraphs more before his purpose was finally revealed: "to draw attention to the plight of Jews in Germany."

Inured by thousands of reports of massacres—I had long ago reached the point where I could read about Auschwitz over lunch—I was nevertheless stunned by the account of Lux's action. How despondent had this man been to fulfill Hitler's ultimate plans for him! And how deluded was he in his belief that one Jew's death could rouse a world indifferent to the deaths of millions. Buried in the nethermost pages of the *Times*, his Jewishness mentioned only in passing, Stefan Lux came to exemplify for me the impotence that had facilitated the Holocaust, and that Israel had been created to correct. Lux was the very reason why I was moving to the Jewish state, and why I would serve in its army.

My conclusions were perfectly in keeping with the Zionist interpretation of the Holocaust, as enshrined at the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem. Six million Jews died, Yad Vashem explained, because they lacked a state, because they lacked an army. American Jews accepted this interpretation unquestioningly for nearly three decades, until the late 1970s, when parts of the community began to challenge Israel's status as the exclusive repository of Jewish remembrance. Slowly a less political and less Zionist view of the recent catastrophe gained ground, and eventually it found expression in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, and in many like-minded institutions nationwide.

Visitors to the American exhibitions were exposed to a radically different version of the Holocaust than the one on display at Yad Vashem. No longer was Jewish sovereignty portrayed as the best guarantee against genocide, nor the Holocaust as the dark corollary of Jewish statelessness. Racism and hatred, not the absence of Jewish power, had produced the death camps; and so the remedy was not more militarism, it was tolerance and a strengthening of universal values. In asserting such an interpretation of the catastrophe, American Jewry seemed to be impugning the very idea of Jewish power.

But the tension between the American Jewish understanding of the Holocaust and the Israeli understanding of the Holocaust did not originate in the 1970s. It had begun many years before, in the early months of World War II. The controversy can be traced to the actions of a small group of Jews from Palestine, under the leadership of Peter Bergson. The Bergsonites, as their opponents called them, strove to shake American Jews—and through them the American government—out of their lethargy, and to instruct them in the modern mechanics of power.

BERGSON'S REMARKABLE STORY has been told by historians and memoirists (most memorably by his admirer Ben Hecht), but never by Bergson himself. That silence has now ended with the appearance of David S. Wyman and Rafael Medoff's important book. They are veteran chroniclers of America's shameful inaction during the Holocaust; and in their new book they present a summary of the group's operations, followed by oral-history interviews with Bergson and several of his associates, Jews and non-Jews. The transcripts reveal the single-mindedness of Bergson's purpose, his courage and his creativity, and the vision that led him, despite his own sense of failure, to triumph.

On July 7, 1940, a twenty-five-year-old Lithuanian-born Jew, a refugee from Russian pogroms and Jewish Orthodoxy who had moved to Palestine and joined the outlawed Revisionist Zionist movement, landed in New York City. His name was Hillel Kook, but to protect his prominent family back in Palestine—his uncle was the chief rabbi of the Jewish community in Palestine, the extraordinary Abraham Isaac Kook—he adopted the surname of his favorite philosopher and called himself Peter. Together with nine other Palestinian Jews, Peter Bergson set to work establishing a Jewish combat unit to help fight fascism in the Middle East.

Bergson had come at the request of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the founder of the Revisionists, who had created a Jewish Legion to fight alongside the British in World War I. In contrast to the dominant Zionism of Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion, which aspired to gradually build a largely agrarian socialist Jewish homeland within Palestine on the basis of the immigration of the ablest young Jews, Revisionism called for immediate mass immigration to establish a capitalist Jewish state in all of Palestine. The Legion, Jabotinsky believed, had helped to achieve that goal by strengthening the Zionist case in the post–World War I debate over Palestine. Now, with the world again at war, he hoped to replicate that achievement with

MICHAEL B. OREN is a senior fellow at The Shalem Center in Jerusalem and the author most recently of *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oxford University Press).

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support from the world's emergent superpower: the United States.

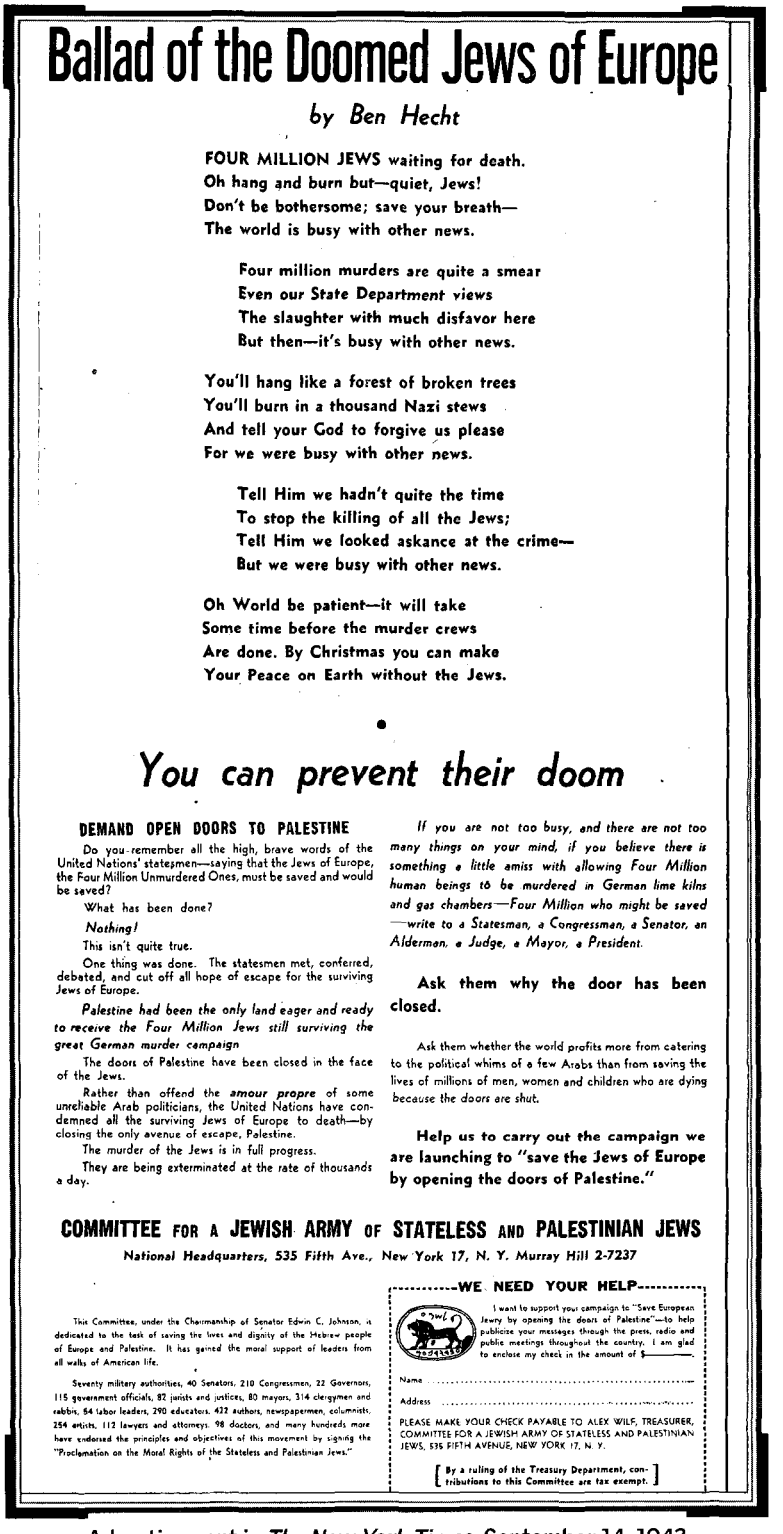
Confounding his efforts was the fact that Britain, in a notorious White Paper in 1939, had detached itself from Zionism and practically sealed off Palestine from further Jewish immigration. America, moreover, had yet to enter the war. Yet the obstacles facing Bergson seemed even more insurmountable. A month after he set to work, Jabotinsky died, leaving his young acolytes leaderless. And the Zionist establishment in America, closely linked with the Labor-dominated Jewish Agency, was virulently opposed to Revisionism. Even the non-Zionist organizations, headed by a German-Jewish elite, worked to quash any challenges to their leadership, especially by upstarts such as Bergson. Lastly and most formidably was the American Jewish community itself, which was unlike any that Bergson, who had formerly worked among Jews in Poland and France, had ever encountered.

Regarding themselves as thoroughly American in a way that few European Jews thought of themselves as genuinely European, much less sympathetic to Zionism, American Jews nevertheless lived under a pall of Depression-era anti-Semitism that made them the favorite targets of Father Coughlin and other hate-mongers. "Americans don't like Jews much better than do Nazis," observed *Fortune* in 1939; and according to the polls more than half of the population agreed. Afraid to make themselves troublesome, American Jews were reluctant to criticize their government and especially its president, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who had received 90 percent of their votes and whom they naïvely regarded as their protector.

Spurring such a community to fight openly for its interests, to challenge Roosevelt if necessary, would have seemed an impossible mission, but Bergson never shirked from the impossible. "A golden youth ... a kind of prince," was how one fellow Revisionist, Eliahu Amikam, described him. "A bon vivant with British manners ... very bright and ambitious." Upon meeting him for the first time, Ben Hecht was struck by his "small blond mustache, an English accent and a voice inclined to squeak under excitement," but he was soon calling Bergson a "Hebrew hero.... A man devoted to controversy ... stormy with ideas." But Bergson was more than merely heroic. Prescient, possessed of an audacious imagination, he intuited the future symbiosis of the media and power. And if he never quite fathomed the American Jewish community, he certainly understood America.

With no contacts and no real budget to speak of, Bergson established the Committee for a Jewish Army (CJA) on December 5, 1941, and set out in search of members. His luckiest find was Hecht, the prolific writer of books and shows and films, an irreverent spin doctor who, though no Zionist, was fed up with what he scorned as "the hide-your-Jewish-head psychology." During a much-needed meal at the 21 Club in New York, Hecht's favorite eatery, Bergson told his host of his plan to create a Palestinian Jewish army, already trained and only "a bus ride from the front," prepared to fight to the death. "An army with such a spirit can actually change the course of the war in Africa," Bergson exclaimed. "They can win it!"

Hecht was persuaded, and with his copywriting flare Bergson gambled on a tactic never before employed by American Jews. It ran in the January 5 edition of the *Times*: a full-page advertisement declaring, "Jews Fight for the Right to Fight," and adding: "The Jews of Palestine and the stateless Jews of the world do not only want to pray—THEY WANT TO FIGHT!!!!" Affixed to the statement were the signatures of senators, congressmen, and clergy—another Bergsonian innovation. Contributions flowed in, financing another two hundred advertisements over the next four years, in forty American papers and fifteen American cities; but instead of applauding the accomplishment, American Jewish lead-



Ballad of the Doomed Jews of Europe

by Ben Hecht

FOUR MILLION JEWS waiting for death.
Oh hang and burn but—quiet, Jews!
Don't be bothersome; save your breath—
The world is busy with other news.

Four million murders are quite a smear
Even our State Department views
The slaughter with much disfavor here
But then—it's busy with other news.

You'll hang like a forest of broken trees
You'll burn in a thousand Nazi stews
And tell your God to forgive us please
For we were busy with other news.

Tell Him we hadn't quite the time
To stop the killing of all the Jews;
Tell Him we looked askance at the crime—
But we were busy with other news.

Oh World be patient—it will take
Some time before the murder crews
Are done. By Christmas you can make
Your Peace on Earth without the Jews.

You can prevent their doom

DEMAND OPEN DOORS TO PALESTINE

Do you remember all the high, brave words of the United Nations' statesmen—saying that the Jews of Europe, the Four Million Unmurdered Ones, must be saved and would be saved?

What has been done?

Nothing!

This isn't quite true.

One thing was done. The statesmen met, conferred, debated, and cut off all hope of escape for the surviving Jews of Europe.

Palestine had been the only land eager and ready to receive the Four Million Jews still surviving the great German murder campaign

The doors of Palestine have been closed in the face of the Jews.

Rather than offend the ***amour propre*** of some unreliable Arab politicians, the United Nations have condemned all the surviving Jews of Europe to death—by closing the only avenue of escape, Palestine.

The murder of the Jews is in full progress.

They are being exterminated at the rate of thousands a day.

If you are not too busy, and there are not too many things on your mind, if you believe there is something a little amiss with allowing Four Million human beings to be murdered in German lime kilns and gas chambers—Four Million who might be saved —write to a Statesman, a Congressman, a Senator, an Alderman, a Judge, a Mayor, a President.

Ask them why the door has been closed.

Ask them whether the world profits more from catering to the political whims of a few Arabs than from saving the lives of millions of men, women and children who are dying *because the doors are shut.*

Help us to carry out the campaign we are launching to "save the Jews of Europe by opening the doors of Palestine."

COMMITTEE FOR A JEWISH ARMY OF STATELESS AND PALESTINIAN JEWS

National Headquarters, 535 Fifth Ave., New York 17, N. Y. Murray Hill 2-7237

This Committee, under the Chairmanship of Senator Edwin C. Johnson, is dedicated to the task of saving the lives and dignity of the Hebrew people of Europe and Palestine. It has gained the moral support of leaders from all walks of American life.

Seventy military authorities, 40 Senators, 210 Congressmen, 22 Governors, 115 government officials, 82 jurists and justices, 80 mayors, 314 clergymen and rabbis, 64 labor leaders, 290 educators, 422 authors, newspapermen, columnists, 254 artists, 112 lawyers and attorneys, 98 doctors, and many hundreds more have endorsed the principles and objectives of this movement by signing the "Proclamation on the Moral Rights of the Stateless and Palestinian Jews."

WE NEED YOUR HELP

I want to support your campaign to "Save European Jewry by opening the doors of Palestine"—to help publicize your messages through the press, radio and public meetings throughout the country. I am glad to enclose my check in the amount of $_____.

Name .....

Address .....

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO ALEX WILF, TREASURER, COMMITTEE FOR A JEWISH ARMY OF STATELESS AND PALESTINIAN JEWS, 535 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

[By a ruling of the Treasury Department, contributions to this Committee are tax exempt.]

Advertisement in *The New York Times*, September 14, 1943

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ers were outraged. "Full-page ads then was an unheard-of thing," Bergson recalled. "They thought this was obscene. For political [aims]—for Jews! There were Jews on the obituary page of the *Times*... [but] suddenly an ad? They thought it was a disgrace."

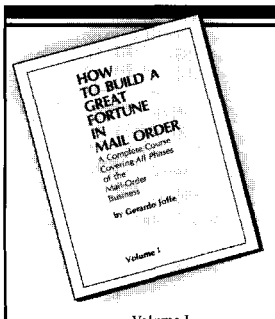
BERGSON'S ADVERTISEMENTS instantly incurred the ire of anti-Zionist organizations such as the American Jewish Committee, which resisted any attempt to distinguish a national Jewish identity, and the wrath of American Zionist leaders headed by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. A co-founder of the NAACP, the ACLU, and the American Jewish Congress, and a slavish supporter of Roosevelt, Wise abhorred Revisionism—what he called "fascism in Yiddish or Hebrew"—and resented any effort to force the president's hand. Rarely deigning to refer to Bergson by name, Wise in conversations with government officials denounced the "small group of Jews" as alien and subversive. Responding to these charges, both the IRS and the FBI closely monitored the group, but failed to find any irregularities in Bergson's operations—on the contrary, federal agents approached him with expressions of personal support and even offered donations.

Undaunted, Bergson ventured beyond political advertising into another inchoate art: congressional lobbying. Citing the magnitude of the Jewish emergency and therefore the justness of a Jewish army, he recruited senators from states with the fewest Jews—Guy Gillette of Iowa, Ed Johnson of Colorado, Elbert Thomas of Utah. On the basis of a shared hostility to England he persuaded Representative Andrew Somers, a militant Irish nationalist from New York, to sponsor a bill in favor of the CJA. Bergson worked to build what we now call bipartisan coalitions, and to reach out to other liberation movements such as the Indian National Congress and the Free French. He was also quick to grasp the power of celebrity in America, and to harvest it effectively. The stars associated with his campaign included Melvyn Douglas, Frank Sinatra, Jerry Lewis, Jimmy Durante, Dean Martin, and Danny Thomas. Along with performers, there were also the composer and conductor Leonard Bernstein, the Nobel Prize–winning writer Sigrid Undset, the journalists Lowell Thomas, Dorothy Parker, and Pierre van Paassen, and the theologians Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich.

For all the publicity generated by the CJA, most American leaders, who were loath to antagonize their British allies and dissuaded by mainstream Jewish organizations, withheld their support from Bergson. Yet Bergson remained committed to the cause, years later informing Wyman that "we wanted to have a Jewish army because we felt we were a Jewish nation. We were talking about survival as a nation, not as individuals." Diverting him from that task took an event so shattering and so monstrous that neither he nor the American Jewish community could initially grasp its dimensions.

IN AUGUST 1942, word reached Wise of the Nazi slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Jews. State Department officials, seeking confirmation of the reports, asked Wise not to disclose the information, and he obliged them until November 25. On that day *The New York Times* carried the story on page 10, under a large whiskey ad; there was no follow-up. The American Jewish leadership appeared dumbstruck, stunned by the enormity of the crime but reluctant to press Roosevelt to act, especially now that the United States was fully engaged in the war. They complacently went along with government spokesmen who claimed that winning the war was the quickest way to end the massacres, and that all of America's efforts should be channeled toward that goal. American Zionists were also content to leave the setting of war priorities to the American army and its commander-in-chief. Convening at the Hotel Commodore in New York on November 29, they passed numerous resolutions on Palestine's development, but only one calling attention to "the reported program ... for the extermination of the Jews."

Though unswerving in his Zionist convictions, Bergson believed that saving Jewish lives took precedence over creating a Jewish state, and he revised his agenda accordingly. While he would never abandon his quest for a Jewish army, the bulk of his energies from 1942 on were devoted to the more pressing goal of rescuing European Jews. This could only be accomplished, Bergson concluded, by changing the widespread assumption that that the mass killings were an internal German affair—"We felt that the major reason why nobody did anything was the confusion that the Germans are killing their own Jews and it's none of our business"—and by securing direct American intervention. "There was a powerful government [Germany] using all its resources," he later explained. "By the time we learned about it, it's killed two million people. A method of destruction of such a scope had to be counteracted by another big force"—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namely, the United States.

Together with Hecht and a mixed staff of Palestinian and American Jews, Bergson embarked on another ambitious public relations campaign. On the first anniversary of Pearl Harbor, four major newspapers carried a two-page "Proclamation on the Moral Rights of the Stateless and Palestinian Jews," signed by 1,500 prominent Americans, among them Langston Hughes, Humphrey Bogart, Aaron Copland, Eugene O'Neill, and Senator Harry Truman of Missouri, all pledging that "we shall no longer witness with pity alone ... the calculated extermination of the ancient Jewish people by the barbarous Nazis." More ads followed, together with dozens of pro-Bergson editorials authorized by William Randolph Hearst, who became an ardent benefactor.

Propelled by this publicity, Bergson steadily gained access to higher sources of power: to former President Herbert Hoover, to Secretary of Defense Cordell Hull, and finally to Eleanor Roosevelt, all of whom assured him of their sympathy. But their sympathy could not save the Jews. In their Moscow Declaration of November 1, 1943, the Allied Powers listed numerous victims of Nazi atrocities—Poles, Serbs, Russians, Cretans—but they excluded the Jews. Similarly, the Anglo-American conference on refugees, held in Bermuda in April, produced no plan for rescue nor even additional visas for refugees. Any hope of progress was again expunged by Britain's refusal to re-open Palestine to Jewish immigration, and by the State Department's fear of an anti-American backlash in the Arab world. Underlying such strategic considerations, however, was the old school anti-Semitism epitomized by Undersecretary of State Breckinridge Long, in charge of refugee affairs, who deliberately stalled visa applications and limited those issued to less than ten percent of the American quota.

"To 5,000,000 Jews caught in the Nazi deathtrap, Bermuda was a 'cruel mockery,'" declared an ad designed by Bergson and signed by thirty-three senators. It was Bergson's view that the Bermuda conference, by signaling Germany that there would be no political or diplomatic or military cost for the murder of Jews, had removed the last moral impediment to assailing Roosevelt. "They tried to avoid the word 'Jew' at Bermuda," Wyman quotes Samuel Merlin, a close Bergson associate, as saying. "Our first concern was to destroy the anonymity of the victim." Another advertisement had the ghost of Hecht's Uncle Abraham, killed by the Germans, waiting forlornly on a White House windowsill for Roosevelt to take some action, while another regaled the *Times*' readers with "Oh hang and burn but—quiet, Jews! ... The world is busy with other news."

The American Jewish establishment, hardly enamored of Bergson before, was now livid. "*Mi samcha*," Wise accosted Bergson at a turbulent meeting at the end of 1943, quoting the Israelite in Exodus who berated Moses when he attempted to intervene in his dispute with another Israelite: "Who empowered you?" Bergson's response was unlikely to conciliate the rabbi: "We represent the conscience of the Hebrew nation. We represent ourselves. You are an American clergyman and a member of the Democratic Party.... On the day on which one square yard of Palestine will be free, I shall be there as a citizen, and abide by the decision of whoever will be the government of the Hebrew people.... Whereas you will then continue to be an American clergyman, member of the Democratic Party."

Wise went on to warn of an upsurge of anti-Semitism in America, and the cancellation of tax-exempt status for Jewish charities, and the need for "ten divisions" of GIs to quell the Arab revolt in Palestine, should Bergson persist with his demands. Wise, Bergson recalled, "typical of what I call the ghetto Jewish leadership, surrendered [to Roosevelt] without a word.... They [the Jewish leaders] thought that we are ... little guys who are working for their own ego and position as Jewish charity bureaucrats. They call us irresponsible.... 'Responsible' means do nothing."

But Jewish leaders did not do nothing. Together with Nahum Goldmann, his co-founder in the World Jewish Congress, Wise urged administration officials to deport or to draft Bergson, and pressured politicians to avoid him. Samuel Rosenman, a prominent member of the American Jewish Committee and a close adviser to Roosevelt, told the president not to meet with a delegation of four hundred Orthodox rabbis that Bergson had brought to Washington to protest American policy. "Rosenman to me is the most guilty of the bunch," Bergson recounted bitterly. When, in March 1943, Bergson rented out Madison Square Garden for the production of Ben Hecht's play *We Will Never Die*—produced by Billy Rose, directed by Moss Hart, with a score by Kurt Weill, and starring Paul Muni, Edward G. Robinson, and Stella Adler—Wise and his colleagues lobbied intensely to keep the curtain from rising.

They failed. The show sold out and played in a half-dozen cities, reaping tremendous profits. With these revenues, Bergson organized the Emergency Conference to Save the Jewish People of Europe, held on July 20, 1943 in New York, where 1,500 participants produced nine proposals for rescue, including the threat to try all facilitators of the Final Solution for war crimes. The conference set up an Emergency Committee whose goal was to promote the creation of a permanent American commission on refugees. A pioneer in political advertising and lobbying, Bergson was also breaking ground in the fields of political action that we now call human rights and humanitarian intervention.

SUCH A COMMISSION already existed to preserve endangered art works in Europe, but no similar body was established to save the Jews. Since the initiative had been Bergson's, Jewish leaders managed to block it in the House. Yet the Senate voted unanimously in favor of the commission, and when the Treasury Department reported on Long's efforts to impede immigration, in a report called "Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews," Roosevelt realized that he could no longer ignore the issue. The result was the establishment on January 22, 1944 of the War Refugee Board, which was charged "to take all measures within its power to rescue the victims of enemy oppression."

A classic case of too little too late, the board was meagerly empowered and feebly budgeted. It succeeded in saving only an estimated 200,000 Jews. Bergson meanwhile continued to press for additional efforts, such as the designation of free ports and shelters for refugees. In contrast to the board's emphasis on helping refugees, he sought to create more refugees. "Jews within Europe should not be considered potential refugees but potential corpses," he said. His boldest scheme, launched in May 1944, was the Hebrew Committee of National Liberation. Conceived as a government-in-exile, complete with a Washington embassy, the committee claimed to represent all stateless and Palestinian Jews and demanded recognition as a co-belligerent in the war.

The platform of the Hebrew Committee unleashed a torrent of opposition from Jewish leaders appalled by its arrogation of the Jewish Agency's authority and by its alleged attempt to divide the Jewish nation. Goldmann told the State Department that Wise now "regarded Bergson as equally as great an enemy to the Jews as Hitler," and exhorted Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. that "everything must be done to liquidate the Bergsonites." One aide to the secretary noted that "every organization ... is more

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interested in their fight with some other organization than they are with the objective of saving Jews.... I think the feeling is so strong in this issue that I wouldn't be surprised to see Bergson killed."

By the war's end, Bergson recalled, he was "worn out ... beat. There was a sense of losing. A sense of failure." But that pessimism did not prevent him from mounting another Zionist extravaganza, *A Flag Is Born*—the young Marlon Brando had a leading role. The proceeds went to purchase *The Ben Hecht*, a refugee smuggling boat, and to publish a magazine called *The Answer*, whose logo, "1776 is Palestine," equated the struggle of Zionism for a Jewish state in Palestine with America's fight for independence. With the termination of the British Mandate over Palestine on May 14, 1948, Bergson ceased all activities in the United States ("we are the only group in Jewish public life that ever liquidated themselves voluntarily"), rented a DC-3, and flew off to take part in the war for Israel's creation. Behind him he left an agonized belief in what he and his group had nearly accomplished:

> The whole effort was to convince ... the people, the five hundred or whatever it is, who make up the policy-making thing of the [U.S.] government ... that this is an important war [to save Jews] that they have to engage in.... We failed. This is the truth. We came close, we came close. We came close.

BUT DID BERGSON really fail? The existence of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and its like could easily be adduced as evidence that he did. Bergson came to teach the American Jews about power and its applications to the Holocaust—a supremely Zionist lesson. Sixty years later, his teachings appear to have been lost. The gap between American Jewish and Israeli interpretations of the Holocaust widens, as indicated by the recent exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York called "Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery," with its implicit criticism of all power structures, American and Israeli. American Jewish and Israeli teenagers who once joined hands on March of the Living visits to the death camps now embark on separate pilgrimages—the Americans to educate themselves about hatred, the Israelis to prepare for the army.

And yet such appearances are fundamentally deceiving. Just up the road from the Holocaust Memorial, in the United States Capitol, the American Jewish community maintains one of the nation's most effective and powerful lobbies. The same mainstream organizations that once excoriated Bergson and his tactics today spend millions of dollars annually on pamphlets and advertisements defending Israel. No president, Republican or Democrat, can afford to ignore the concerted Jewish vote. American Jews pay homage to the spirit of America's civil society, and inveigh against prejudice, and extol brotherhood, but they have also learned the Bergsonian lesson: to wield power unashamedly, in accordance with their rights and their needs.

This, as Wyman and Medoff's book reminds us, is Bergson's ultimate victory. Through his revolutionary and often quirky example, he showed American Jews that they need not sit silently while six million of their co-religionists were destroyed. Nor must they beat their breasts—or worse, like Stefan Lux, turn to suicide—to get the world's attention. Bergson demonstrated that Jews everywhere had nothing to fear from exerting power, but an incalculable amount to lose.

As with most victories, Bergson's came at a price, not only national but also personal. Unable to blend into Israeli society, at odds not only with the reigning socialists but also with the new Revisionist leaders who objected to his insistence that Israel distinguish itself from world Jewry by declaring itself a "Hebrew" state, he dabbled in international trade and died near Tel Aviv, largely forgotten but once again Hillel Kook, in August, 2001. All his life he remained bitter about the American Jewish leadership during World War II and perplexed by its inability to act. "If I were a Jewish leader, dead, I'd probably be turning in my grave," he finally confessed to his interviewers. "And if I was alive, I would probably have a very guilty conscience."

More than half a century later, with the generation of the Holocaust now passing from our midst, the relevance of Bergson's legacy is undiminished, and not only for American and Israeli Jews. That legacy reminds us that silence is the handmaiden of genocide, and fear its unwitting assistant. By standing up for the imperiled, by insisting on morality in foreign policy, and by asserting unassailable human rights, evil can still be combated. In a world in which mass murders are still with us, the teachings of Peter Bergson deserve to be honored. The age of genocide is not over, and the example of Bergson's activism, of his insistence upon the priority of conscience in foreign policy, of his conviction that the sense of self-reliance and the sense of mutual responsibility are both necessary for the fight against undeniable evil—all this makes him a figure who deserves to endure in memory. ■

Martyrs to Venus

By ALAN TAYLOR

Sexual Revolution in Early America by Richard Godbeer

(Johns Hopkins University Press, 430 pp., $34.95)

WE USUALLY THINK of colonial Americans as the passionless Puritans of Victorian stereotype. Mencken infamously described the Puritans as bedeviled by "the haunting, haunting fear that somewhere, someone may be happy." When asked to think of a colonial woman, we conjure up Hester Prynne, forced by Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel to wear a scarlet letter for her adultery. Hawthorne and Mencken (and many others) blamed the colonial past for repressions in their own day, while we recall their criticisms to congratulate ourselves for being oh so liberated and tolerant.

In his lively but uneven book, Richard Godbeer challenges our traditional stereotypes of colonial America by recovering a remarkable volume of sexual discussion and debate, prosecution and evasion. The diverse colonists were more than just the Puritans of New England, and not even they were as puritanical as we have imagined. In both their sexual excesses and anxieties, Godbeer's colonists seem surprisingly modern and accessible. Indeed, in their "complex and conflict-ridden

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sexual culture," Godbeer detects something very familiar: a "culture war, pitting different conceptions of sexual and marital etiquette against each other."

Godbeer discerns at least two sexual revolutions, and perhaps three, in early America. English colonization of New England began during the first revolution: a systematic drive by Puritan moral reformers to restrain the exuberance of Elizabethan England. In particular, the Puritans challenged an alternative folk tradition of marriage that Godbeer characterizes as "pragmatic" and "popular." Avoiding the bother and the expense of official marriage and divorce, the pragmatic held their own private, informal marriages, impromptu separations, and convenient remarriages. Frustrated by official indifference to moral enforcement in England, many Puritans emigrated to found colonies in New England that enforced their vision of a "Bible Commonwealth." But they were accompanied by sufficient numbers of moral reprobates to keep their new courts busy, and the Puritan revolution made little headway in the other, southern colonies, where ministers and magistrates were too few and far between to reform the popular tradition of loose and serial marriage.

Despite the limits of the Puritan revolution, Godbeer detects during the eighteenth century a second and radically different cultural revolution "toward a more individualistic marketplace of sexual desire and fulfillment, much to the horror of those who feared that greater personal freedom brought with it greater individual vulnerability." Premarital pregnancy surged and a declining proportion of young men married the women whom they seduced and impregnated. And at century's end, horrified moralists mounted what could be described as a third revolution: a new celebration of female morality and premarital chastity in the name of the virtue needed to sustain the new republic founded by the American Revolution.

IT IS TIDY in concept, but Godbeer's tripartite scheme suffers from difficulties in the colonial evidence—and from his book's division into episodic chapters that pursue divergent methods applied to different colonial regions to offer inconsistent conclusions about the big picture. To be fair, Godbeer rightly acknowledges that our own culture obsesses about sex in ways starkly alien to our colonial predecessors. They had no notion of "sexuality"—a concept that we have promoted into the core of human identity. In Godbeer's words, the colonists "viewed sex not as a product of sexuality but as a component of spirituality, cultural identity, and social status." Lacking the categories of homosexual and heterosexual, the colonists thought instead in terms of various acts, some moral (vaginal sex within marriage) but most immoral (masturbation, fornication, adultery, sodomy, bestiality). They dreaded sodomy but characterized no one as fundamentally a sodomite, for they understood all sins as tempting everyone, even the most overtly godly. Such were the wages of universal, original sin in a culture immersed in the Bible rather than in Freud.

And yet Godbeer's entire project ultimately derives from our own anachronistic curiosity to find sex and sexuality in the past. No matter his attention to historical context, Godbeer ultimately serves our voyeurism by highlighting the sexual as a distinct realm of human activity. Indeed, his book succeeds most fully as a sprightly description of sexual escapades, offering colorful anecdotes that tease our conventional expectations of stuffy colonists. In one seventeenth-century New England town, Samuel Terry provocatively disrupted Sabbath services by standing before a church window "chafing his yard to provoke lust, even in sermon time." Another New England court case revealed fornication by Hannah Green with William Clark: "a noise affrighted him and made him run away and he then carried away in haste her petticoat instead of his britches." Although Godbeer means to discredit the simple stereotype of the repressed Puritan, he benefits from the persistence of that image in our minds, which affords us pleasure in discovering past sins.

Previous scholars also balked at examining colonial sex as its own subject, largely from a fear that the historical sources were insufficient. Godbeer forged ahead, "astonished by the richness of the material that survives on the subject." The problem is not that Godbeer lacks sources, but that they are trickier than he recognizes. Few diaries and letters survive from the colonial era, and fewer still offer frank admission to sexual thoughts and acts. Generalizing from those scatological few to the larger colonial population is problematic, to say the least. More often Godbeer must rely on hearsay accounts recorded by travelers who were keen to gather scandal at the expense of locales they disliked; and most often he depends on the recorded testimony in court cases brought by authorities or by aggrieved spouses seeking divorces. The travelers' accounts and court cases provide plenty of seamy and steamy quotations, but taking them at face value skews our picture of colonial sexuality toward the sensational. Finding what he seeks, Godbeer proves reluctant to doubt any of his sources. That he discovers more conflict than consensus, more deviance than conformity, seems inevitable given the nature of his sources—and his disinterest in challenging them. Reading today's police log or tabloid newspaper certainly conveys a gritty reality denied in other genres, but it is a reality that needs to be kept in proportion when characterizing an entire society.

Wedded to an episodic and anecdotal approach, Godbeer balks at designing quantitative tests that might have given statistical precision and meaning to his broad assertions that suggest rampant illicit sex in the colonies. He observes that "it was not unusual for early Americans to pass from one cohabitational relationship to the next with scant regard for the formalities of divorce and remarriage." Does "not unusual" mean that most colonists did so? The statement is meaningless without some attempt to determine, for at least some sample of the population, the proportion of unofficial couples. Without statistical tests yoked to a research design, we have only a bunch of colorful stories that may or may not be representative of the culture.

When Godbeer does employ numbers, they appear out of context and vaguely convey a misleading sense of frequency. In his treatment of New England, for example, Godbeer reports that "more than a hundred women were convicted" for bearing children out of wedlock in Essex County between 1640 and 1685. About one hundred does not seem so many when divided by forty-five years, which indicates only 2.2 such cases per year—in a county that had at least six thousand inhabitants by 1685. If Godbeer provided comparable data for out-of-wedlock births from seventeenth-century England—or from contemporary America—we would certainly conclude that the New England Puritans were remarkably successful at reducing premarital pregnancy. Two cases per year in a populous county only seems impressive when run against our stereotypical expectation that those repressed Puritans must have had no illicit sex.

In interpreting varying levels of prosecution Godbeer wants it both ways, regarding both a low level and a high level as evidence for rampant illicit sex. In seventeenth-century New England, where he finds numerous prosecutions for fornication and lewd speech, Godbeer concludes that the magistrates had their hands full coping with popular deviance and defiance. But in seventeenth-century Virginia, he regards the only known sodomy case as evidence that the overwhelmingly male population so regularly

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practiced sodomy, and so openly resented its sole prosecution, that the officials never again dared to enforce the law. Similarly, in eighteenth-century Philadelphia, where all moral prosecutions were inconveniently sparse, Godbeer insists that rampant promiscuity had worn down the authorities.

A specialist in the cultural history of seventeenth-century New England, Godbeer appears most comfortable and persuasive when analyzing particular episodes and texts drawn from that region and that century. In an especially impressive passage, Godbeer examines the case of Nicholas Sension of Windsor, Connecticut in 1677. Sension's prosecution for sodomy seems to confirm Puritan rigidity and intolerance, but Godbeer shows that for more than twenty preceding years Sension's neighbors had recognized and reproved his behavior without involving the court. Since Sension was otherwise a good neighbor and a prosperous farmer who acted only upon young men of lower status, his townsmen balked at prosecuting him for a crime that carried the death penalty. Despite abundant evidence for multiple acts, the jury convicted Sension only of the lesser charge of attempted sodomy, which brought a public whipping and shaming instead of hanging. His Puritan neighbors persistently saw Sension as a wayward but redeemable sinner no different from any other soul, rather than as a distinctive sodomite. Throughout the century, only two men suffered execution for sodomy in New England.

In addition to softening our image of Puritan moral enforcement, Godbeer ameliorates the Puritans' cold image by recovering their sexual passion within both marriage and spirituality. In this emphasis, he follows the lead of Edmund S. Morgan, who made a similar case in 1942. Puritan sermons, poetry, and love letters celebrated marital and procreative sex in part to discourage all sexuality before or outside marriage. Never people to do things by halves, the Puritans extolled foreplay and orgasm by husband and wife. In a guide to marriage, Reverend William Gouge preached that sex "must be performed with good will and delight, willingly, readily, and cheerfully." Believing that conception depended upon a female orgasm, ministers urged every husband to attend to his wife's needs. Another marital guide instructed that "when the husband cometh into the wife's chamber, he must entertain her with all kind of dalliance, wanton behavior, and allurements to venery."

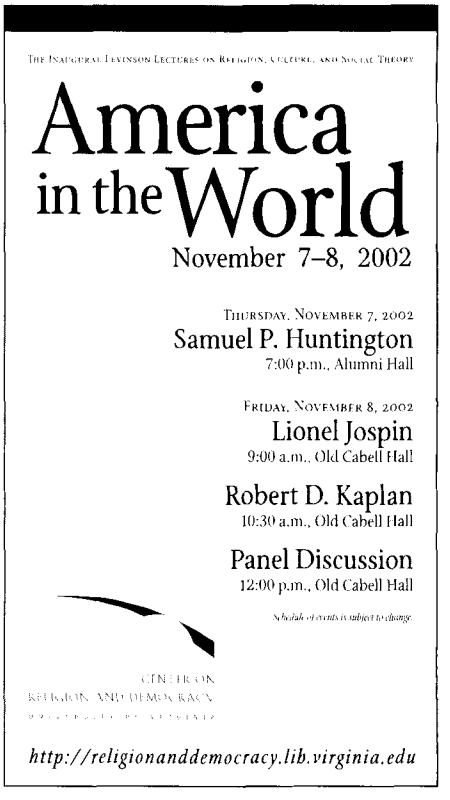
More striking still, the Puritans expressed their spirituality in erotic terms that transcended gender. Ministers exhorted Puritans, male and female, to submit to "an eternal love affair with Jesus Christ." One young man asked in his diary, "Will the Lord now again return and embrace me in the arms of his dearest love? Will he fall upon my neck and kiss me?" Since souls were equal and either without gender or vaguely female, Puritan men comfortably spoke of submitting as brides to ravishment by Christ as their spiritual bridegroom. Godbeer concludes that "Puritan sensibility offered a way to spiritualize sex and sexualize the spirit in a glorious and torrid symbiosis."

New England's relatively dense pattern of settlement, churches, and courts permitted close moral oversight by neighbors and by numerous ministers and magistrates. But in the southern colonies settlers were more dispersed, and their churches and courts were fewer and usually more distant. In the colonial South, most of the ordained clergy were Anglicans rather than Puritans, but they sought a similar sexual decorum confined within the bounds of official marriage. In touring the raw and far-flung southern settlements, however, the Anglican missionaries could only fume in righteous frustration at their moral impotence. In 1766, the hyperbolic Reverend Charles Woodmason insisted that "concubinage [was] general" and that men engaged in "swopping their wives as cattle." Worst of all, "they will commit the grossest enormities before my face and laugh at all admonition." One especially impertinent settler stole and donned Woodmason's clerical gown before slipping into bed with a loose woman—who then brazenly circulated the story that Woodmason had ravished her.

Behaviors that Woodmason described as fornication, adultery, bigamy, and prostitution Godbeer characterizes as within the pragmatic and popular tradition of informal and serial marriage. Daunted by official fees and long, hard travel to the nearest minister, common settlers conducted their own marriage and separation ceremonies. Some even followed an old English custom of publicly selling a wife before witnesses to a new husband (apparently at her request) as a way to absolve the old husband of responsibility for her subsequent debts.

In the southern, middle portion of his book, Godbeer also turns, belatedly, to the relationship of sex to race. In contrast to other work on the history of sex and sexuality, Godbeer seems surprisingly disinterested in overtly applying a theory to organize his diverse evidence. Other colonial historians have focused on the construction of legal and customary barriers to sexual relations by white women with the racial other—Indians and enslaved Africans—as fundamental to a power structure that privileged white men. Rather than beginning there, or weaving that dimension into every chapter, as would befit the multiracial society of colonial America, Godbeer primarily examines sexuality within the white race, while confining discussion of interracial sex to two belated chapters about relations with Indians and about enslaved Africans. And in both of those chapters Godbeer offers relatively little about native or African concepts and patterns of sex, focusing instead on what white people wrote about, or did to, people of color.

Despite some rich sources, Godbeer's discussion of relations with Indians proves surprisingly insubstantial. He inconclusively concludes that "rape was doubtless more common and relations in general more contested than the extant sources, with all their biases, suggest; but we should not ignore evidence for more positive interactions. Indians and Englishmen could and sometimes did enjoy each other, love each other, and live together in peace." No doubt, but a historian should discern some larger pattern and some trend over time, with some explanation for both, rather than simply describe, in conditional terms, two extremes that accommodate



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every behavior in between—which is to say, nothing at all.

Godbeer's treatment of interracial sex with Africans is clearer and more discerning, despite his heavy reliance for sources on the usual narrow set of suspects. The flamboyant diarists William Byrd of Virginia, John Gabriel Stedman of Surinam, and Thomas Thistlewood of Jamaica provide plenty of scatological color. Byrd famously "rogered" his wife on a billiard table and fondled "wenches" in the taverns, while praying for redemption in his study. Stedman reported that the jealous wife of a straying planter "put an end to the life of a young and beautiful Quodroon girl by the infernal means of plunging a red hot poker in her body, by those parts which decency forbids to mention." Between 1751 and 1764, Thistlewood recorded intercourse 1,774 times with at least 109 different slave women, mostly by compulsion. To his credit, Godbeer recognizes the exceptional nature of his few sources: "William Byrd may well have been unique in the extent to which he wrote about sex and the place that it occupied in his mental world." Godbeer also breaks important new ground by contrasting the attitudes of the elites in Virginia and Carolina over their exploitation of slave women. Where the Virginia planters, including Thomas Jefferson, tried (ultimately in vain) to keep their slave mistresses secret, the South Carolina elites more frankly celebrated or debated their own indulgence in enslaved bodies.

Skeleton With Beads

"She was lying extended on the back, just under the surface of the old midden. Around the neck and reaching almost to the waist were three strands of small rectangular bone beads..."
—Frederica de Laguna, Kachemak Bay, Alaska, 1930

I am thinking of my brothers and how
every snowstorm we lay under streetlamps
in January, Anchorage, our navy suits
striped with the reflective silver my mother
had placed down the limbs, the sky more
orange than black, and imagined our bodies
rising, the flakes becoming planets, comets,
stars as we remained there, arranged,
the steady snow ticking its needle on beads,
three muscled hearts, sinew, bone of the same
soil, constellation of cells, eyelids
tipped open to the cold. Remained so
quietly until the sky had placed its thin
sheet right over us and we were very far.

Caroline Goodwin

Godbeer finally examines, from three especially divergent angles, the sexual revolution that he detects in the eighteenth century. The southern and West Indian colonies vanish from the last third, and the previously neglected middle colonies (Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey) at last make a cameo appearance, while New England resumes its dominant role in his analysis.

In eighteenth-century New England, premarital sex and pregnancy surged. Previous historical interpretations generally followed the trope first advanced by evangelical critics during the religious revivals of the 1740s: that New England had declined from Puritan piety to wallow in immorality. More sensibly, Godbeer depicts a triumph of moral pragmatism over the impossible purity of the initial Puritan agenda. Unable to prevent young people from engaging in premarital sex, rural parents sensibly sought some influence and information by encouraging the practice of "bundling." Instead of seeking sex in barns or byways, young people slept together, "bundled" in the paternal home. Although ostensibly clothed and limited to fondling, the bundlers produced the surge in premarital pregnancy.

Some ministers fulminated against the practice, but in vain and to the detriment of their influence and careers. Parents defended bundling because it revealed whom their daughters slept with, so that in the event of pregnancy they could bring effective pressure for marriage or a financial settlement. "In order to ensure that unwed fathers were held accountable," Godbeer explains, "it was essential that people other than the lovers themselves know that they had been involved with each other." A growing number of young women got only a settlement for their out-of-wedlock baby, but they suffered surprisingly little damage to their reputations. Most of these young women quickly found another reputable man to marry them. Godbeer describes the new rules of the game "as a pragmatic accommodation between the greater sexual freedom that young people now enjoyed and the desire of parents to maintain protective surveillance over their children."

But then Godbeer gives his book a schizophrenic (and perhaps postmodern) turn by narrating the same developments in a far more ominous tone. That tone registers his shift away from the social records of the preceding chapter entirely into cultural analysis of a literary genre. The morally didactic essays and novels of the post-revolutionary era depicted premarital pregnancy as an indelible stain, fatal to a woman's reputation and prospects of marriage. Seduced, impregnated, and abandoned, a young woman should wither in depression and illness into an early grave rather than suffer a prolonged life of disgrace, poverty, and prostitution. Where literature had previously cast women as lusty temptresses, the new didacticism of the early republic depicted them as fundamentally more moral and vulnerable than men. This put the responsibility for chastity upon women, who should resist the sexual temptations that overwhelmed men. "Let the fair remember," preached one essayist, "that their peace, dignity, and character chiefly depend on themselves." Such moralizing implied, in Godbeer's words, "that women could seduce men into virtue, a reversal of earlier writings that portrayed womankind as luring male victims into vice." He concludes that the didactic literature "sought nothing less than the moral reconstruction of the individual, especially of women, in order to meet the challenges of an increasingly permissive society."

Although an effective summary of the post-revolutionary literature, Godbeer's account of such woe and ruin radically diverges from the social patterns that he previously described: pragmatic families readily handling premarital pregnancy with little or no damage to their daughters' reputations. Should we conclude, then, that the stories were mere romances, indulged in imagination without connection—by either cause or effect—to behavior? No, Godbeer insists, "the changing tone ... was not merely mimetic: the seduction genre appealed to Americans because it spoke to troubling issues with which they were all too familiar." Insignificant in one chapter, seduction and ruin become real, rampant, and troubling in the next.

To explain Americans' increasing anxiety over premarital sex, Godbeer invokes political ideology. The American Revolution spawned a republican ideology that stressed the role of women in raising

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virtuous children capable of self-sacrifice for the common good. The widespread seduction and abandonment of women therefore threatened the survival of the republic; preserving liberty required greater female morality and greater parental oversight.

In this explanatory reach to the American Revolution, Godbeer is in numerous company. Historians often credit every social and cultural change in the early republic to the effects of political revolution. The problem is that many of those changes also occurred in counter-revolutionary Great Britain. Eighteenth-century British writers invented, and then exported to America, the didactic literature of seduction and ruin. Indeed, the American popularity of British novels attests to the cultural limits of the American Revolution. Despite political independence, Americans remained culturally dependent on Britain as the literary metropolis that set the standards for manners and morals, particularly for the socially ambitious.

A more satisfactory explanation for the apparent coexistence of pragmatic courtship and literary hysteria is that they derived from, and spoke to, two different generations in two distinct social orbits: one mid-eighteenth-century, rural, and traditional; the other late-eighteenth-century, cosmopolitan, and upwardly mobile. The evidence for bundling and its management comes primarily from the country towns, where most of the population lived, while the moral didacticism later emerged in the newspapers, magazines, and novels that were printed in the seaports and the market towns of the interior. The print media spoke first and foremost to the middle-class Americans who longed to perfect the manners and the morality that comprised "gentility"—a standard that derived from an idealized image of the British gentry as found in Jane Austen's novels.

This is not to say that the Revolution played no part. Prior to independence, only the colonial elite mastered gentility, but the Revolution democratized aspiration, as middle-class people, in country towns as well as seaport cities, cultivated their own pretensions to gentility. Then, at century's end, a didactic literature that began in the cities found growing numbers of country readers eager to escape their reputations as bumpkins. Regrettably, Godbeer does not return to the social data for premarital pregnancy at the close of the eighteenth century and the start of the nineteenth century to see if the didactic literature altered behavior in the countryside. Here his segregation of social and cultural methods in distinct chapters proves especially limiting. If he found that premarital pregnancies did not markedly decline in the era of didactic literature, perhaps those stories served as a vicarious outlet that vented anxieties in negative fantasies, thereby permitting young people to persist in premarital sex.

If Godbeer's final chapter is accurate, then the didactic essays and novels had little or no moderating effect on sexual behavior. This chapter depicts post-revolutionary Philadelphia as sin city: "casual sex, unmarried relationships, and adulterous affairs were commonplace." Citing an "unbridled atmosphere" and a "polyamorous culture," Godbeer adds that "venereal infection ran rampant among the city's residents, and out-of-wedlock pregnancies also became increasingly common." But he presents little evidence to support his lurid caricature of the city as a latter-day Babylon. No statistical analysis supports his claims for out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and, in his only cited figure for venereal disease, clerks detected it in "around ten per cent" of those admitted to Philadelphia's hospital for the poor during a single year (June 1800 to June 1801). One year and ten percent of the city's most marginal people, including prostitutes, is not meaningful evidence for an epidemic in the city as a whole for a generation. To document brazen abandon among Philadelphia's women, Godbeer notes that "11 of 14 women cited for bastardy by the Philadelphia Quaker meeting between 1760 and 1780 were expelled because they refused to acknowledge that they had sinned." But a rate of less than one such case per year in a city with a population in excess of 30,000 seems better evidence for moral decorum than for a "polyamorous culture."

Godbeer's best evidence comes from a handful of divorce cases. Adultery and bigamy ran "rampant," but he cites only two divorce cases and must explain the virtual absence of prosecution by authorities. Exaggerating Philadelphia's scale, he explains that "keeping track of marital histories in a large and chaotic metropolis was extremely challenging, so that bigamy and adulterous cohabitation seldom came to the courts' attention save in the context of divorce petitions." Similarly, two other divorce cases embolden Godbeer to declare that "some Philadelphia women evidently responded with enthusiasm to opportunities for nonmarital sex that came their way or actively sought pleasure in casual encounters and transient affairs." But should we characterize an entire city as promiscuous on the basis of charges hurled in a few divorce cases? Godbeer's response is circular: "not all allegations made by divorce petitioners and their supporters are necessarily reliable, but late eighteenth-century Philadelphians must have realized that claims of rampant promiscuity would appear only too credible." Only to those who took their reality from those divorce records.

Thus Godbeer proposes contradictory readings of sexual culture in late-eighteenth-century America. The inhabitants appear as pragmatists who shrewdly managed surging rates of premarital pregnancy; and then they are consumed with anxiety about premarital sex and persuaded to indoctrinate their daughters to defend the republic with their chastity. Alas, although largely published in Philadelphia, none of this literature apparently affected behavior in that moral sinkhole. The book's conflicting pictures of eighteenth-century culture owe something to its author's own ambivalence about social criticism of contemporary forms of sexuality.

Godbeer warns against our conservatives "who argue that only certain kinds of sexual relationships should be accorded cultural legitimacy" and who "often point to colonial society as an ideal from which modern Americans have degenerated." By recognizing colonial America as a highly contested sexual culture, we cannot indulge in it as a golden age of moral consensus from which to fulminate against modern sins. But Godbeer follows his warning about conservatism with a surprising expression of nostalgia for an organic and hierarchical colonial regime that he occasionally imagines preceded the libertarian sexual revolution that he sometimes finds in the later eighteenth century. Rather than celebrate the "permissive sexual climate" of his version of Philadelphia, Godbeer emphasizes the dark side: "as urban society became less organic and more individualistic, that left its members less protected as well as restricted by the corporate and hierarchic ties of the past."

For poor people in particular, "individual freedom must have been a lonely and frightening experience." He cites the sad fate of Con McCue, a young Irish immigrant admitted in 1794 into the Philadelphia almshouse with a fatal case of venereal disease. The almshouse clerk recorded McCue's demise as "a martyrdom to Venus." Godbeer observes, "There were many such martyrdoms during this period in Philadelphia, undergone by men and women whose intimate encounters bore deadly fruit." The Puritans could expect no better vindication than Godbeer's moralizing depiction of a lurid Philadelphia. ■

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TEL AVIV DIARIST

The Pride

I'D SPENT TEN DAYS IN ISRAEL, and there had not been a (successful) suicide bombing since I arrived. In fact, there hadn't been a successful bombing since September 19. Peaceful times, you might say. Until, that is, rush hour at roughly 8 a.m. on a Thursday, when a driver stopped his bus and—with a medic who happened to be nearby—ran to help a man who'd fallen from the vehicle's back entrance and hit his head on the street. It wasn't until they loosened the man's clothes to help him breathe that they saw the belt strapped with explosives. The medic and the driver pinned the bomber to the ground and shouted for everyone to run. Finally, once the passengers and the crowd had largely dispersed, these two everyday heroes let him go . . . to paradise, I suppose. (You can read about the incident in riveting—and affecting—detail in an article by TNR alum James Bennet in *The New York Times*, October 11.)

IT'S DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE A PEOPLE more practically alert to danger or a people more determined to triumph over it than the Israelis. For years, U.S. editorialists and talking heads have been prophesying that Israel would be sundered by pressure from without and differences from within. Instead, the country has never been more united. And what most galls those critics who ring their hands over Israel's inner soul—but care not a fig for its defense—is that this unity is to a large extent the work of the man they hate most, Ariel Sharon. The intifada seems to have summoned in him the capacity to govern from Israel's emotional center, which means he is—like the country—fierce when necessary, accommodating when possible, sober always. When the time is right, I suspect he will surprise his enemies again by proposing a reasonable political and territorial peace.

EHUD BARAK WAS NO PUSHOVER either. But he misjudged not only the Palestinian leadership but Israel's Lebanese neighbors as well. When he withdrew Israeli troops from a narrow security zone in southern Lebanon 29 months ago, he assumed that Beirut would reassert its sovereignty. That hasn't happened. Look across Israel's northern border, as I did last week, and you see Hezbollah rather than Lebanese government flags. Abutting two Hezbollah encampments were two utterly passive platoons of Ghanaian troops attached to the mostly "avert-your-eyes" UNIFIL units—whose handling of the kidnapping and killing of three Israeli soldiers just after Barak's withdrawal is another stain on Kofi Annan's resumé, a resumé already tarnished by his shameful inaction in Bosnia and Rwanda.

IS THERE A BORDER ANYWHERE LIKE that between Lebanon and Israel? There is no no-man's-land between the two countries, no protective zone. The children of Misgav Am, Manara, Metzuba, Metullah, and Margalit—legendary kibbutzim and moshavim of the northern Galilee—now face, up close, the barbarous killers of Hezbollah and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards besides. When I came to the border, militiamen photographed me from the other side—something they do every time a strange face appears on the Israeli side. Huge billboards with photographs advertise the savagery across the border. One showed a Hezbollah recruit carrying the decapitated head of an Israeli soldier.

BUT HEZBOLLAH DOES NOT LIMIT itself to one-on-one killing. It now possesses an estimated 10,000 rockets, many long-range—these provided not by Iran via Damascus, as in the past, but by Syria itself. In other words, they are the direct work of Dr. Bashar Assad, the "new generation" leader who was supposed to bring moderation to Syria. The rockets are capable of hitting Haifa and thus seriously damaging Israeli industry. This is the shield behind which Hezbollah, in one of its rare joint ventures with the Lebanese government, has now embarked on a scheme of diverting the waters of the Wazzani River from the reservoirs of Israel. Hezbollah wants to provoke Israel in advance of the impending U.S.-U.K. war on Iraq. For now, Sharon will likely exercise restraint. But only for now. After Saddam Hussein, Israel may decide that Syria's air defenses, such as they are, must be taken out. And don't be surprised if you start hearing talk about regime change in Damascus as well. It will not be long, I suspect, before the two Baath tyrannies both become what they have long deserved to be: bad historical memories.

YOU WILL SOON HEAR PLENTY ABOUT Oriana Fallaci's new book *The Rage and the Pride* (Rizzoli), and you can read in the October issue of *Commentary* a remarkable narrative by Christopher Caldwell about the great stress it is causing European intellectuals. Long ago, Fallaci was a contributor to TNR and a personal friend. What we quarreled over, I do not remember. But I do remember that she was a hero to all of my progressive friends for tangling, in question-and-answer format, with the Shah, Henry Kissinger, and others. I suspect they will be much less happy with her latest work. Her controversial new feuilleton is not about Islam and Israel, although Israelis will understand its anger. It is about Islam and the West, Islam and modernity, Islam and joy and joylessness, Islam and curiosity, Islam and women. Her book is—how shall I put this?—idiosyncratically translated, idiosyncratically punctuated, and certainly idiosyncratically argued. It is extreme, and some of the extremes tarnish its message. But Fallaci was always willing to go to the edge, where truth borders on hysteria. That was her strength then, and it may be her strength now.

WHAT THE WORLD IS EXPERIENCING these days may not exactly be a clash of civilizations. But there is no doubt that large segments of the Islamic world are at war with the tolerance and liberalism of the West, with its curiosity and its learning. The warriors aim to demoralize the West and those—including those Muslims—who find Western ways to their liking. But the West still does not grasp the danger. European leaders blithely assume that mass Muslim immigration does not threaten Western values, and those who suggest otherwise—such as Holland's Pim Fortuyn—are derided and shunned.

I WAS READING *THE RAGE AND THE Pride* when I heard news of the nearly 200 dead in Bali, a confirmation of Fallaci's dread. This was not an attack on Jews or Americans but on Hindus and Christians, Australians and Europeans. It is not accidental, as the Marxists used to say, that the target was a nightclub—a place where people of different races and religions were dancing and drinking, lusting and even lovemaking. For these sins, as punishment to the sinners and as augury of the blazing sword to come, was the conflagration visited on Bali. This is not just a war between Islam and the Jews or Islam and the West. This is a war of cosmic losers against all that offends them. It is a war of zealot Muslims against everyone else. We are all feeling and fearing what Fallaci calls "the bad smell of a Holy War," a war with real weapons, and its consequence is incinerated flesh.

MARTIN PERETZ

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